

THE  
NOTION  
OF  
SCHISM

Stated according to the  
ANTIETNS,

And considered with Reference to the  
NON-CONFORMISTS :

And the PLEAS for SCHISMATICKS  
examined : Being *Animadversions* upon  
the *Plea* for the *Non-Conformists*.

With Reflections on that Famous *Traet* of  
*Schism*, Written by Mr. *Hales*.

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In Two Letters to a very Worthy Gentleman.

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The Second Edition :  
With the Addition of a third Letter.

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By Robert Conold, M. A.

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Πιστεύω εἰς μίαν ἁγίαν Καθολικὴν καὶ Ἀποστολικὴν  
Ἐκκλησίαν.

*Symbolum Nicenum.*

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yard. 1677.





TO THE  
Right Reverend  
FATHER in GOD  
ANTHONY  
Lord Bishop  
OF  
NORWICH.

---

*My Lord,*



Could never re-  
concile the seve-  
ral Church Mo-  
dels and Divi-  
sions of Chri-  
stendom, with those old uni-  
ted Articles of One Catho-  
A 3 lick

## *The Epistle*

lick Church , and Communion of Saints. And there can be no hope of Unity , except all Christians will agree to come under that Antient and uniform Government of Bishops : I believe all the wisdom of the (Christian) World will never discover any more probable Expedient to compose our Distractions.

But my Lord, we dwell amongst men who are enemies to Peace and Government ; Men who will have no Lords over them, but those  
Grand

## Dedictory.

Grand Sultans of private  
fancie and Interest ; Men  
who under the notion of  
Christian liberty, would in-  
troduce a Barbarism ; for  
such *Epiphanius* accounts an  
ungovernable Humour.

Βαρβαρισμός ὃ κέκληται, ἀπὸ τῶ μὴ τὸς τότε *Epist. ad*  
ἀνθρώπους Ἀρχηγόν τινα ἔκειν, ἢ μίαν συμφω- *Acaci-*  
νίαν, ἀλλὰ ὅτι πᾶς τις ἑαυτῷ ἑξοίκει, καὶ νόμος *um.*  
ἑαυτῷ κατὰ τὰς προτίμησιν τοῦ ἰδίου βελήμα-  
τος ἐγίνετο.

These men are exactly of  
the temper of the *Donatian*  
Schismaticks, of whom St.  
*Augustine* tells us, that they *S. Aug.*  
A 4                      Sainted *Ep. 16*

## The Epistle

Sainted *Julian* the Apo-  
state for his Toleration, and  
malign'd *Constantine* and  
*Theodosius* for their penal  
Laws. *Tunc Constantinus*  
*prior contra partem Dona-*  
*ti severissimam legem dedit.*  
*Hunc imitati Filii ejus ta-*  
*lia præceperunt. Quibus suc-*  
*cedens Julianus desertor Chri-*  
*sti & inimicus, supplican-*  
*tibus vestris Rogatiano &*  
*Tontio, libertatem perditio-*  
*ni partis Donati permisit.*  
*Denique tunc reddidit Basili-*  
*cas Hæreticis, quando Tem-*  
*pla Dæmoniis, eo modo pu-*  
*tans Christianum nomen posse*  
*perire*



## Dedictory.

perire de Ternis , si Unitati Ecclesiæ , de qua lapsus fuerat , invideret, & sacrilegas dissensiones liberas esse permetteret : hæc erat ejus prædicanda justitia , quam supplicantes 'Lionatistæ Rogatianus & Pontius laudaverunt. Dicentes homini Apostatæ, quod apud eum, sola justitia haberet locum.

This little Treatise which I now humbly dedicate to your Lordship , is direct Antipodes to these mens principles ; and I easily foresaw , the publishing so feverely

## *The Epistle*

were a Truth would certainly expose me to the outcries and calumnies of those men, whom I adjudged Schismatics.

My Lord, it is your Honour that you are an excellent Governour, one who have conscientiously observ'd that Apostolick Canon to Rule with Diligence, and not to think it Prudence to be perjur'd. It is my felicity that I am under your Paternal inspection; and when I saw that some of the old *English Circumcel-*  
*liones*

Rom. 12.  
8.

ὁ ἀποστόλος  
μεντορεῖ  
αὐτοῦ.

## Dedictory.

*liones* did pursue me with clamours and threatnings, I thought your Lordships Patronage was the most proper, and nearest Sanctuary I could flie to upon earth.

There is nothing to commend the Book, or the Author, to your Lordships favour, but only a true *English* integrity; for my Conscience assures me, that I am free from all foreign Tinctures, either of *Rome* or *Geneva*.

But

## The Epistle

But yet the *Doctor* (who is your Lordships Antagonist as well as mine) does loudly clamour me as an Introducer of Popery. Could I be convinc'd that there is any thing in this Book that serves the ends of what is justly call'd a Popish Interest, I would be Executioner my self, and with my own hands commit it to the fire. My Lord, we are under a very unhappy *Dilemma*, we must either Renounce our Episcopacy, and Priesthood ; or incur the



## *Dedictory.*

the suspicion of Popery by asserting our selves to be a Catholick Church. I do Renounce all the Popish Decrees and Articles of the Council of *Trent*, with as much sincerity as I do abjure the *Scottish* Covenant; and that I assure your Lordship, I do with a very serious abhorrence.

But the *Doctor* hath perswaded his Profelytes, that I am a designer of rank Popery; and your Lordship knows when the Factions set  
a mark

## *The Epistle*

a mark upon a man, it becomes (as to them) an indeleble Character. Fanatick Jealousies and Opinions are like the old *Persian* Statutes, unalterable.

It is not now all my protestations against, nor abjurations of Popery will ever purge me from these mens suspicions ; nay I believe their Jealousies are so obstinate and incurable , that tho' I had a Protestant Testimonial subscrib'd by Saint *Michael*, and *Gabriel*, and all the Hierarchy of Heaven,  
it

## *Dedictory.*

it would not pass for a Certificate with the *Doctor* or his Disciples. Neither the dying Vows, nor the Books, nor the Blood of *Charles* the first, and Arch-bishop *Laud*, could ever take off that black'ning stain of Popery, which these mens fancies had created.

Therefore I Resolve to disregard all Clamours abroad, and to be happy and contented with my own Innocence at Home. The greatest Honour I covet from without, is, that your Lordship

*The Epistle, &c.*

ship would own me as I am  
sincerely,

My Lord,

A True Son of the Re-  
formed Church of  
England, and

*Your most humble Servant,  
and obedient Presbyter,*

ROB. CONOLD.

6. Kalend.

*Aprilis*

1677.

To





TO THE  
READER.

**T**HE Plea for Non-conformists (tending to vindicate them from Schism) came to my hands long after its Edition, and then by accident too: But the Schism being still continued, I hope you will not think it too Late, or Impertinent to publish these Animadversions upon that Tract. Now, should I protest against all Vanity, and Popularity; disavow all Interest, and Sinister designs; should I tell you in most Solemn, and Sacred protestations, that I have no other

## To the Reader.

end in the publication of these Papers, but the Honour of God, and the Peace of his Church, yet it were still at your mercy to credit these Asseverations, or receive them as the usual pretensions of every Author. Therefore I resolve against the Impertinence of an Apologie, and leave you to the common liberty of Censure: If I meet with the fate of St. Paul, to pass through good as well as bad Report, I shall have Honour, and content enough.

If thou art a sound, and sober member of the Church of England, I know thy Temper cannot be Sullen, or Ill-natur'd: it is thy Genius to be Candid, and Generous, and thy Religion makes thee Charitable: and therefore I am assured that thy Balms cannot break my Head: and if these Papers may in any measure contribute towards thy firmer settlement in the Communion of this Church, my principal End is then effected.

If

## To the Reader.

If thou art a Dissenter from this established Church, but hast not lost that Christian Temper of Modesty, and Humility, read on, there is hope of thy recovery, that thou wilt not dye a Schismatick. But if thou art one who hast given up thy Name, and thy Reason too to the Leader of a Conventicle; let me beseech thee to read no further: for this little Discourse will but provoke thy Passion. I have no Hope to prevail upon Pertinacious resolutions, I never yet cleansed a Leper, nor raised the Dead: but if I had, I should notwithstanding Despond of ever perswading any Obstinate, or Passionate man: for it does not appear to me evident, in all the History of the Gospel, that our Lord (among his many Mighty Works, and Miracles) ever cured Perverseness.

If thou art a Romish Recusant, let me intreat thee to Suffer thy Reason

## To the Reader.

to recover its Liberty, and not alwayes be in Vassallage to those Roman Dictators. I know there are many of that Religion in this Nation, who are Gentlemen, of Complaisant Converse, and Ingenuous Education: but I wonder that ye (who pretend so much Abhorrence of Fanaticism, and boast of Loyalty to your Prince,) should yet degrade your selves to the same Level with the Basest Sectaries, and live in constant Rebellion to the Laws of your Natural Sovereign.

There is great Reason that the Kings of England should ever have a peculiar Jealousie upon your Party: for though your Bodies, and Estates are Subjects of England, yet your Souls, or Religion are under the Empire of a Foreign Jurisdiction: and as long as ye continue so, there is no Reason in the world, that can give the Crown sufficient Security for your lasting Allegiance.



## To the Reader.

ance. As for those of your Religion, who live under the Laws of the Romish Dominions, I have great Charity for them, for they can plead submission to their own Superiours: and I am apt to believe that Plea may be very considerable, when they come to appear before the Prince of Peace, and the God of Order: But for you, whose Lot hath cast you under the Government of the Kingdom, and Catholick Church of England, and yet to Divide from their Jurisdiction, and subject your selves to the Canons of a Forreign Church, is not only a Disobedience against the Laws of this Church, and State, but a Violation of the Antient Canons of the Catholick Church; and is so great a Disorder, and unreasonableness, that the Penalties inflicted for your Recusancy, are as Just, as they are Severe, and ye merit no Compassion. Indeed if your deserting the Romish, would put you out of the Catholick Church, I would never upon  
those

## To the Reader.

*those hard terms perswade you into our Communion. Our Profession of Faith ye will acknowledge to be the antient Catholick, and Apostolick Creed: I know your principal Prejudice is against the Succession of our Bishops, and the Authority of our Priesthood: But let me beseech you to do so much Right to us, and so much Justice to your selves, as impartially to peruse Mr. Mason's Vindication of the Ministry of the Church of England, and if his Transcript of those Acts, and Monuments of our Church will not satisfy you, let some of your subtilest Jesuits convict that Author of Falshood, or Imposture; and I will acknowledge that we are no Catholick Church, and you no Schismaticks.*

*There are many of your Religion, persons of great Honour, and Estates in this Kingdom, who may easily have the Advantage to view, and examine the Original*

## To the Reader.

ginal Records of the Consecration of our English Bishops, in that great Crisis of our Reformation; and methinks in so weighty a matter, where your Estates (if not some rafter Interest) are highly concern'd, ye should be strictly inquisitive, and not so blindly acquiesce in a popular Mistake, and Jesuitical delusion. In the mean time I charge you with the guilt of Schism, in Dividing from the Church of England; and if you think your selves injur'd by this Indictment, let any of your Romish Champions be the Doctor's Second, and publish a Plea for your Vindication; and though I am none of the Worthies of England, yet I will engage for a Reply. If any of you shall think fit to require it, I dare undertake to prove, that the Canons of the Romish Church, do no more oblige any Subject of England, than our Statute Laws do bind the Poles, or Moscovites: and that it is as great a Disorder and Impertinence,

## To the Reader.

tinence, for the Bishop of Rome to excommunicate any of the people of England, as it were for the Lord Chief Justice of England, to outlaw Don Juan of Austria.

*And now, Reader, I leave you to enjoy your Humour, to be Candid, or Clamorous as your fancy inclines you. To be wounded with the Arrows of Bitter Words, is a very easie kind of Martyrdom, and say what you please, I am resolv'd to be unconcern'd, and subscribe myself,*

Your Christian Friend,

R. C.

---

Worthy





Worthy Sir,

**I** Not long since receiv'd from the hand of a Non-conforming Pastor (by way of Answer to my impeaching him of Schism) this Tract Intitul'd A Plea for the Non-conformists, tending to justify them against the clamorous charge of Schism: by a Doctor of Divinity, whom the Dissenters call Dr. Owen. And whether I may attribute it, to the slighting or carelesness of our Clergie, I know not: but as yet I have neither seen or heard of an Answer to it.

Sir, The true Friendship I have for you and your abilities, which I am no stranger unto, prompts me to put this Plea into your handling, and beg your Animadversions upon it: Supposing the Doctor has much wandered from that Notion of Schism deliver'd down to us from the Primitive Fathers; the sense of which Sacred Priests, I shall alwayes rather espouse in any point I find so clearly

clearly determin'd by them, than the crude and partial (if not Enthusiastick) Writings of some Moderns, whose heads seem rather status't with a prejudic'd Interest, than ballac'd with an Apostolick Sobriety.

When I reflect upon this Intrigue of the present Dissenters from the Church of England, in confounding the Notion of Schism with that of Heresie, and by that jejune project would evade that Scandal of being Schismaticks; a discrimination esteemed so odious and perilous among all good Catholicks in all Ages of the Christian Church; I can fancy no other reason they can have than this, (viz.) lest their Profelytes and followers should be justly affrighted at the dangerous guilt of Schism and Separation; and consult their return to that Fold which they have deserted, which is certainly their safest Interest.

Another Stratagem, which has not been less useful for them than the former, is their contemning an Apostolical Succession of Priesthood; and thereby lessening the hazard of a Schismatick condition in the opinion of the people: This unchristian humour they continually instill into the Populacy, and inforce it with this Anti-Apostolick Maxim,

*Maxim, That there is no difference between a Priest and a Laick, but that the first reads the Prayers of the Church, and Preaches Morally, as they call it; and the other is gifted with continual Revelations: for that they must mean, if any thing, by praying by the Spirit in their notion. I must confess I am as yet unconverted to these Opinions, and have an awful respect to your Sacred Order, and I could be as easily Proselyted to Atheism, as to think a Knipperdolling or an Hugh Peters were as true Priests of the Living God, as a Tertullian or a Chrysostom.*

*Sir, As an obedient Son of the Church of England, and a Loyal Subject to my Sovereign, and so oblig'd to be very solicitous of the Welfare of Church and State, give me leave to sigh out some thoughts which have been and are afflictive to my Solitudes, and may detect, if not the causes, at least the encouragements of our Schisms.*

*when I see the admir'd providence of our indulgent Prince (so eminently expressed in his Royal Amnestie and Act of Oblivion) for the obliterating all Animosities and Rancours (which might still ferment in the hearts of men so Diametrically opposite,*  
and

and who had espoused Causes as contradictory as best and worst,) contemned and flouted by an undutiful and unchristian humour of persisting in the same stubbornness wherewith they have check'd two Glorious Princes, and Mated a third ( God bless the fourth ) and wherewith they brought upon our Church and Kingdom, the late horrid and lamentable confusions; Indignation prompts me to think, that Sincere Religion cannot reside in an ungrateful heart; nor true Piety and Loyalty, where there are no Symptoms of their repentance. And let me appeal to common sense and reason, what a frightful face of Government there would appear in this Nation, if all His Majesties evil-disposed Subjects should as boldly resolve to perpetrate all those Crimes prohibited by the Common and Statute Laws of this Realm, as the Dissenters do temerariouly transgress, or fraudulently evade those statutes relating to Conformity.

when I see some of your Sacred Order fly at a Dignity, a Bishoprick, and when they have truss'd it, quarry and prune themselves upon it, and live as if a Diocess were only designed to Gorge and Aggrandize the Bishop, and he not concern'd to be a faithful Shepherd to his flock, but negligent,



gent, if not wholly careless in no small part of his Episcopal Function and Paternal charge (witness the omission of that Solemn Office of Confirmation: ) nor obliged to moderate over, and inspect the manners of his inferior Clergie, who are in Law but his Curates, and whose vices and disorders reflect a Blot upon himself, and a Scandal to the Church; then I think, the longer time runs, its sand will be the fuller of dust, and I am ready to renounce my Philosophy, and believe, that Gold may rust; and we have too many Rosy-Crusians in Divinity to make their Remarques.

when our Parochial Clergie shall out of good nature, tepidity or perjury omit, if not all, at least some part of the Divine Service, to curry their Males, and coaks their Females: when to please a weak Sister, the Cross after Baptism must not be used, and for a bribe the Sacrament shall be Administred to a sitting Bumkin, and the Priest shall civilly be from home, when a thing departed is to have the Burial of an Ass: when every Parish shall have a singular Directory, and every waxen Priest shall assume a Papism to dispense with Oath, Canons and Statutes, and the Diocesan shall be demurely compos'd into a posture of consent with

B

closed

*closed eyes and folded arms, are we then like to be blest with one faith and one way?*

*When too many of our Nobility and Gentry shall assume that honour and glory to list themselves in, and be reputed Sons of our Church of England, but by their Profaneness, Debauchery and prodigious vice, live Antipodes to that holy Profession, and act below the dictates of uneducated nature; then I think this must be influential upon the Manners of the Populacy, and create an inclination to Schism, if not an absolute contempt of Religion in them, who are commonly capable of no other direction in their Morals and Piety, than the vertuous examples of their Superiours.*

*When too many of our Nobility and Gentry shall desert their antient Seats and Country Interests, to enjoy an urbane effeminacy, immerge in the gulfs of Luxury, and to enervate in the Venereal Laboratories of the Town, with the greater Security to their names, and less observation of the world; this must be reputed no small cause of Schism in their Tenants and Dependents, who in many Lordships and places of the Nation want nothing more, than the antique Hospitality*

ality of England, and the Orthodox practice of their Landlords and Patrons, to secure them against the cantings of the Wolves, and to shame them into a conformable obedience: and were it seriously consider'd, how easie and natural the motion is from immorality and Atheism, to disloyalty and civil Apostasie, these Monsters would be pro-scrib'd the Courts of Princes, to learn humanity among flocks and herds.

But when the Sacred Name of Jesus shall be mouth'd by the most vicious persons, to disguise an ugly, perhaps a treasonous design, and novi homines, men of yesterday, shall dare to trifle with that Scepter which dignified them, and problem the Right of their Prince in the face of his Throne; when Englishmen shall Italianize and shoot those envenom'd arrows, their filthy Pasquils to wound their Prince in his reputation, which is the soul of his Throne, O, then I think, if it awakens not all the Sentinels of the Government, sure they are in their dead sleep or infatuated for destruction.

when I consider the ill-boding circumstances attending the Church of England, her prodigious rents, her assiduous and impudent Adversaries, accompanied perhaps

(8)

*with too much Supinity in some of her most Principal members, and when it comes into my mind, that Miracles are ceased too, then each moment spurs on my thoughts to expect, when Religion (now on tiptoes to be gone) should turn her back upon us, and that the ultimate failure of the Faith is at hand, ready to be the Harbinger to the Catholick Doom.*

*But, Sir, not to trouble your more Serene Meditations with such melancholy reflections, give me leave to Alarm you to Muster your notions, and by your Animadversions upon this Doctor, undeceive the deluded multitude in this weighty subject of Schism, the Dam of our Mischiefs, and which threaten the ruine of our Church, and with that the unhinging that excellent temper of Government which has been the envy of the Nations.*

SIR,

*I am yours, &c.*

**W C.**

Honoured



*Honoured Sir,*

**T**Hat Kingship and Episcopacy ;  
 have been the antient and continued Government of this Nation in State and Church, ever since our Primitive Christianity, is evident from undoubted Records : But the Gentlemen of our *New English Interest*, mock at the two old Grandfires, Monarchy and Hierarchy, and begin to hope that they are come to their decrepit Age , and not far from a Grave, and they are preparing for their funeral. It is now scandalous to be Loyal to our Prince, or Regular to the Church. You will be thought a mean spirited Gentleman for expressing any regard to a Minister of Religion. And you have no way to redeem your Honour, but either to turn Atheist, or list your self a Member of the *New Interest*. And now Sir, can it be reconcil'd to Friendship, to ship your Friend, when the Clouds look black and threaten a Storm ? But since you are as kind to me as you are to your self ; and are pleas'd to embark with me, I am resolv'd to adventure,

ture, and am prepar'd for Tempest, and that worst of Hurricanes, the madness of the People.

I think it highly necessary to demonstrate our Non-conformists to be Schismatics : for though meer State Interest may legitimate many severities against those Persons and Principles that are Antipodes to the establish'd Government ; yet if that were truth, which the Doctor pretends to prove, That the Sectaries of *England* were as much in the family of *Jesus*, or in the Communion of the Catholick Church, as the Church of *England* ; it would puzzle my Reason, to make a Substantial Apology for our Penal Laws. But if we can make it evident, that these men walk disorderly, and are Separatists from the Catholick Church, it will then appear, that our Laws are so far from Rigor or Persecution, that they are more charitable provisions, and only design'd to compel men to come in to that Society, where their Eternal Interest will be most rational and manifestly secur'd.

V When I first open'd the *Doctor's Plea* you sent me, mine eye chanc'd upon a very pleasant passage, to this effect, viz. *That the Greek Church call the Church of Rome, Schisma-*

*Schismatick, and the Church of Rome return the Schismatick upon the Greek Church. The Church of England make the Romish Church the Schismatick, and the Church of Rome charge the Schism upon the Church of England.——Again, The Church of England calls her Dissenters Schismaticks, and the Dissenters think the Church to be Schismaticks from them ; and so we have call'd one another Schismaticks Round: and therefore Schism is but Vox & præterea nihil, nothing but a meer noise and Nick-name, which every Party cast upon all them who are not of their Society.*

But let us try the Strength of this Argument, by translating it to another circulating word, and that is Infidelity. The Mahometan calls himself Musalman, which my *Persic Dictionary* assures me, signifies Faithful or Believer in God ; yet we Christians call the Mahometans Infidels ; and they call us Unbelievers. We call the Jews Infidels, and they return the same name upon us and the Mahometans too. Both Christian, Jew, and Mahometan pronounce all Pagans to be Infidels, and ten to one, but they are as stout and peremptory as the rest of Mortals, and think all Mankind Infidels but themselves. Thus the

whole World have call'd one another Infidels Round, and therefore Infidelity is but a meer empty noise, and there is no such thing in the World as a True Religion. I appeal to any sober Judgement, if there be not as much Logick in this, as there was in the other.

I hope it will be an easie discovery, to find out the square of the *Doctors* Circle, and to fix the Notion of Schism upon a certain Basis. And therefore Sir, in obedience to your Request, I shall discuss that great Question, Whether the Non-conformists in *England* meeting together for the Worship of God in places distinct from the Parochial Churches, are not Schismaticks?

To this I shall answer in the Affirmative, and shall consider this Separation, First, With respect to the whole Catholick Church. Secondly, VVith relation to the Church of *England*.

I. First, To be a Member of the Catholick Church, there is required a double Unity : First An Unity of Faith, or Doctrine: a total separation from this, we grant to be Apostasie; a disowning any one fundamental Article, makes a man a Heretick. But in



in this does not consist the formal notion of Schism. Secondly, There is requir'd an Unity of Order or Government, which St. *Cyprian* calls *Unitas Ecclesiastica*. Now a Separation from this Unity, hath the formality of Schism. And for a right understanding of this, I must look back to the first Origine of this Unity. 2.

The Holy *Jesus*, the great Author and Founder of our Religion, was sent to God, and all power in Heaven and Earth committed to him. Now before his Ascension, that he might not leave his Disciples to the end of the World, to be governed by every pretender to Revelation, which would have expos'd his Kingdom upon Earth, to eternal confusions and impostures, he solemnly ordains and consecrates the Apostles his immediate Delegates upon earth, John 20.22. *As my Father sent me, even so send I you* : by vertue of which Commission, the power of Ordaining, Governing and conferring Orders did rest only in the Apostles.

They took care to continue this Succession, and therefore *Timothy* was by the Apostles ordain'd Bishop of *Ephesus*, and *Titus* of *Crete*, and both invested with power of Jurisdiction and conferring Orders, as is evident

evident from St. *Paul's* Epistles directed to them: and though there were many Presbyters in the Dioceses of *Ephesus* and *Crete*, yet none had Authority to ordain Elders or Priests, but only *Timothy* and *Titus*. *Linus* by Apostolick Consecration succeeded the Apostles in the Chair of *Rome*. *Symeon* governed the Church of *Jerusalem*, or the Diocess of *Palestine* next after St. *James*. *Anianus* succeeded St. *Mark* in the Church of *Alexandria*. And this Succession was propagated with so much care and certainty, that *Irenaeus* tells us, He could name all the Successors of the Apostles in the several Apostolick Churches unto his dayes: *Habemus annumerare eos, qui ab Apostolis instituti sunt Episcopi in Ecclesiis, & Successores eorum, usque ad nos*. And this line of Apostolick Succession of Bishops hath continued through all Ages of the Church to our present times. So that he who is out of this line of Apostolick Succession, and exercises any Ministerial Office without the Commission of Episcopal Ordination, is but a Lay-Impostor, and a Schismatick from the Catholick Church. And all other Societies of Christian people, who totally withdraw themselves from the Government of their Bishops, who are the Apostles Successors, and from the Ministry of those Presbyters law-

*Lib. 3. adv.*

*Har. cap. 3.*

lawfully set over them by Episcopal Ordination and Institution, and cast themselves into any other Model of Government, are guilty of Schism. This was the formal Notion of Schism in the sense of the anti-ent Church. *Irenæus* Bishop of *Lugdunum*, who convers'd with *Polycarpus* the Disciple of *St. John*, may in reason be allowed to understand the Primitive and Apostolick Notion of Schism, better than our *Doct̃or* at the distance of sixteen hundred years. He in his Book *Adversus Hæreses*, exhorts the Christian VVorld to hearken only to those Priests, who were in the Communion of the Catholick Church ; and who those are, he there describes, *Qua propter eis, qui in Ecclesia sunt Presbyteris obaudire oportet iis, qui successionem habent ab Apostolis sicut ostendimus, qui cum Episcopatus successionem charisma veritatis certum secundum placitum Patris accepērunt*——*Reliquos vero qui absistunt à principali successionem & quocunque loco colliguntur, suspectos habere vel quasi Hereticos & male sententia, vel quasi scindentes & elatos, & sibi placentes, aut rursus ut hypocritas questus gratia & vana gloria hoc operantes: Qui autem scindunt & separant unitatem Ecclesie, eandem quam Hieroboam pœnam percipiunt à Deo.*

Lib. 4.  
cap. 43.

*Ignatius*

ἔσοι γὰρ  
 χρεῖς εἰ-  
 σιν, ἔτοι-  
 μετὰ τῆς  
 ἐπισκόπου  
 εἰσιν. Ep.  
 ad Phila-  
 delph.  
 And ex-  
 hortings to  
 obey the  
 Bishops, i  
 and Priests  
 he tells  
 them, χω-  
 ρίς τῶν  
 ἐκκλησιῶν  
 ἔκλεκτῶν  
 ἢ ἔστιν.  
 Ignat. Ep.  
 ad Trall.;

*Ignatius* the second Bishop of *Antioch* in  
 succession from *St. Peter*, in his Epistles *ad*  
*Trallianos*, *ad Smyrnenses*, and in those to  
 the *Philippians*, *Ephesians* and *Philadelphi-*  
*ans*, frequently charges them to keep them-  
 selves in the unity and communion of the  
 Christian Church, by a regular obedience  
 to the Bishops, and by communication with  
 the Priests, who were set over them by the  
 Authority of Episcopal Order : and to dis-  
 obey those Bishops and their Presbyters,  
 and to separate from them, is in those Epi-  
 stles charg'd with Schism.

*Athanasius* brands *Ischyas* for a Schis-  
 matick, and justifies the charge from this  
 reason, that *Ischyas* did usurp a Ministerial  
 Authority without a regular Ordination  
 from the Bishops of the Catholick Church,  
 and gathered to himself a distinct Congre-  
 gation separate from the Jurisdiction of the  
 Bishop of *Alexandria*, in whose Province he  
 lived.

*St. Cyprian* in his fortieth Epistle *ad po-*  
*pulum Carthaginensem de quinque Presby-*  
*teris Schismaticis*, exhorts them to have no  
 communion with those who had divided  
 themselves from their Bishops ; for he tells  
 them in that Epistle, That to be *sine Epi-*  
*scopis*,



scopis, was to be *extra Ecclesiam*. And in his Book *de Unitate*, he gives us this notion of Schism, *Contemptis Episcopis & derelictis Dei Sacerdotibus constituere aliud Altare, or Conventicula diversa constituere*: That it was Schism to contemn and forsake the Bishops, and Priests of God, and to set up another Altar, or to settle distinct Conventicles. And this he accounts so foul a crime, that he tells us in the same discourse, *Talis, etiamsi occisi in confessione fuerint, Macula ista nec sanguine abluatur, inextinguibilis & gravis culpa discordia nec passione purgatur*, That Martyrdom it self cannot expiate the guilt of Schism. And when *Maximus Urbanus, Sydonius* and *Macarius* return'd from the *Novatian* faction into the communion of the Church, they express it thus, *Episcopo nostro pacem fecimus*, they had reconcil'd themselves to the Bishop: and this was enough to assure *St. Cyprian*, they had renounc'd their Schism, and were restor'd to the Churches Communion. I will end this with the assertion of *St. Augustine*. *Radix Epist. 42. Christiana societatis per sedes Apostolorum & successiones Episcoporum, certâ per orbem propagatione diffunditur: i.e.* the root or foundation of unity or communion in the Christian Church, is founded in the several Seats of the Apostles, and diffused through the

the Christian VVorld, by the certain propagation or succession of Bishops. Therefore in the judgement of St. *Augustine*, all those persons, or societies that have divided themselves from the Bishops and Priests of the Apostolick succession, are but wild plants, and no branches of the Catholick stock. I could fill many Pages more with Testimonies of the same nature ; but such numerous Quotations would look like Pedantick impertinence : and I doubt not, but those Authorities I have already mentioned, will persuade you to believe, That a total separation from the Orders and Government of Bishops, was constantly adjudg'd to be Schism by the concurrent sentiments of the antient Church.

And now Sir, having examined these Testimonies, I may proceed to sentence : That seeing the Teachers of our Non-conforming Congregations in *England* were never regularly Ordain'd to any Ministerial Function by the hands of the Bishops ( deriving their Authority from Apostolick succession ) and seeing their Leaders and their blind Profelytes have wholly withdrawn themselves, from the Conduct & Government of Episcopal Authority, I shall therefore adventure to pronounce them Schismatics,  
not

not only from the Church of *England*, but from the whole Corporation of the Catholick Church. Theretore that which the *Doctor* so Magisterially asserts at the end of his seventeenth Page is no Axiom of Divinity; for I have already prov'd, that a man may be Schismatick from the whole Catholick Church on earth without Heresie or Apostasie. The premises being considered, will furnish us with an Answer to that passionate Harangue, pag. 21. *Do we not owne Christ, his Gospel, the same points of faith, the same acts of Worship, where is the Separation then?* This *St. Augustine* tells us, was the same *Plea* of the *Donatists*, and might have been urged by the *Novatians*, and Schismatick Presbyters of *Carthage*, but it would not acquit them from Schism, nor will it vindicate our *English* Sectaries.

*Corah* and his confederate Mutineers were neither Hereticks nor Apostates, but men of the same Creed with *Moses* and *Aaron*: their crime was the violating that subordination which God had appointed, and not submitting themselves to the Superiour Authority of the Priesthood. And Sir, it may be worth your observation, that this *Plea* of the *Doctor*, and that of the *Hebrew* Rebels have the same sense; for just thus they plead,

plead Numb. 16. 3. *All the Congregation is holy, every one of them* : that is, in the Doctor's phrase, Do we not own *Moses*, his Laws, the same points of faith, the same acts of VVorship ? But this plausible plea would not prevail, nor mitigate the provocation ; for God punished one Schism with another, *The earth rent, and swallowed them up*, and with open mouth taught the rest of the Church to keep Unity and Order, as well as the profession of a true Religion. Therefore the Answer is very easie to the Doctor's ruffling Question ; Do we not own Christ, his Gospel, the same points of faith, the same acts of VVorship, where is the separation then ? VVhy Sir, the separation is in dividing from the communion of all the Bishops and Episcopal Presbyters, who in a constant line succeeding the Apostles, have only a just and regular Authority to govern and guide the Christian Church.

pag. 34.

The Doctor in the beginning of pag. 34. tells us, That a controversie among them of the same communion is the chief, if not the only notion of Schism that the Scripture gives us. I confess, the word *σχίσμα* Schism in its general notion signifies any manner of separation or division ; and therefore I do  
acknow-



acknowledge, that those dissensions that were within the bowels of the Apostolick and Catholick Church were called Schisms, both in the Scripture, and in the VVritings of the ancient Fathers : but this does not hinder, but that the same word may be used to signifie a separation from the Catholick Church ; for if a wound in the body may be called a Schism, sure Amputation or the cutting-off from the body is the greatest rent and Schism in the VVorld. For though there were indeed divisions in the Church of *Corinth*, where some were for *Paul*, and some for *Apollos*, and some for *Cephas* : this at the worst was but a faction or a breach of charity, but it was not properly Schism in the highest sense of the word ; for they still settled themselves under the Government and Ministry of the Apostles, or some Presbyters ordained by the hands of the Apostles. But those Conventicles that crept into houses, and formed Assemblies distinct from the communion of the Apostolick Church, those that heaped to themselves Teachers, which, as the phrase imports, were not set over them by Apostolick Order and Institution ; those that despised Dominion, and spake evil of those Dignities which did superintend the Government of the Church : These men *St. Jude*

C

tells

tell us, were those that did separate themselves, that is, were Schismatics ; and just so are their Brethren the Sectaries of *England*.

Before I proceed to the next inquiry that concerns the Schism from the Church of *England*, it will be necessary to state the right notion of the Catholick Church according to the sense of the antient Councils and Fathers.

The *Doctor* and his Complices are for Comprehension, and give us a very wide notion of the Catholick Church ; for they will have all men that profess the name of Christ, though in some things Hereticks and Schismatics too, yet to be included within the boundaries of the Catholick Church. But I observe, the Antients would not endure this Comprehension ; for they reckoned none to be in the communion of the Catholick Church, but those who confessed the common faith delivered to the Saints, and kept themselves under the Orders and Government of the Bishops, who were the Apostles Successors : and therefore oft-times in Councils and antient Epistles we find this Superscription, To the Catholick Church in *Antioch*, To the Catholick Church of *Alexandria*,

*andria*, To the Catholick Church of Rome, &c. this still being used in a contradiction from the *Novatians*, *Arrians* and *Donatists*, which the antient Church look'd upon as Schismaticks and *extra Ecclesiam*.

Now having advanc'd thus far, the way is prepared for the second enquiry, Whether our Non-conformists are guilty of Schism from the Church of *England*? And I doubt not but to prove the Affirmative.

The Church of *England* adhere to that Creed which was delivered by the Apostles, professed by the antient Primitive Church, and confirm'd by the first four General Councils; it hath preserv'd the Unity of Government by a succession of Bishops in the Apostolick line, as appears from the undoubted Archives and Records of *England*: Therefore we are secured that it is in the Unity of the Catholick Church, and a most excellent part of it.

Now as our Christianity obliges us to be members of that body of Christ the Catholick Church: So the eternal reasons of Peace and Order bind us to communicate with that part of the Catholick Church, in  
C 2 which

which our lot hath plac'd us, except it can manifestly appear, that that part is so corrupted that we cannot communicate with it without evident hazard of our salvation. It were an unpardonable disorder, for a Native of *England* dwelling in *London*, to contemn the Laws of our Prince, and to govern himself by the Placaets of the *United Provinces* : and it were as great a confusion, for those who live within the Jurisdiction of the Church of *England*, to submit themselves to the Orders and Government of *Rome* or *Geneva*. Before the Papal Usurpation of Universal Monarchy, the Patriarchs of the Christian Church had their distinct Limits and Jurisdictions : The Patriarch of *Constantinople* had his peculiar Primacy or Regiment, and was not to intermeddle with the Province of *Alexandria* ; and so the Bishop of *Rome* had his peculiar Jurisdiction , and was allowed no inspection over *Constantinople*, *Antioch* or *Alexandria* : and these distinct boundaries were fixed by a Canon of the Council of *Nice*. And because it confutes both the Papal Supremacy and Puritanical Anarchy, I will give you the copy of that Canon.

Τὰ ἀρχαῖα ἔδει κρατεῖσθαι καὶ ἐν Ἀιγύπτῳ, καὶ Λιβύῃ, καὶ Πενταπόλει : ὥς τὸν Ἀλεξανδρείας ἐπί-

σκοποῦ



παλαιον πάντων τέτων ἔχειν τῷ ὕμνῳ, ἐπειδὴν καὶ  
 πρὸ ἐν τῇ Ῥώμῃ ὁπισκόπος τέτω Συνήδρις ἔστιν, ὁμοίως  
 καὶ κατὰ τῷ Ἀντιόχειαν καὶ ἐν ταῖς ἄλλαις ἐπαρ-  
 χίαις, τὰ πρεσβυτέρια σώζειν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις. that  
 is, Let the antient customs be in force ;  
 Let the Bishop of *Alexandria* have the Ju-  
 risdiction of *Aegypt, Libya* and *Pentapolis*,  
 as likewise the Bishop of *Rome* was ac-  
 customed to have in his Province, and so  
 let the Churches of *Antioch* and other Pro-  
 vinces keep their peculiar priviledges. And  
 so the Christians dwelling under these di-  
 stinct Patriarchates were obliged to a re-  
 spective obedience to their peculiar Provin-  
 cial : and to divide themselves from their  
 proper Patriarch or Bishop was accounted  
 Schism in the antient Church. *Timothy* be-  
 ing constituted Bishop of all the Diocess of  
*Ephesus*, the Christians residing within that  
 Precinct were obliged by the rules of Or-  
 der to submit themselves to his peculiar in-  
 spection, and it had been Schism to have  
 disobeyed him, or separated themselves from  
 his Jurisdiction.

St. *Ambrose* observed this *decorum* him-  
 self, as he tells us by St. *Augustin*, in an E- Aug. Ep. 118.  
 pistle of his *ad Januarium, Cum Roma sum*  
*jejuno Sabbato, cum hic sum non jejuno :*  
 and so St. *Augustin* counsels *Januarium, Sic*

*etiam tu ad quam forte Ecclesiam veneris,*  
*ejus morem serva;* which plainly con-  
 cludes, that Christian peace and order re-  
 quires, that we should conform to the Rites  
 and Canons of that Church, in whose Juris-  
 diction we live. The five Presbyters of  
*Carthage* were by *St. Cyprian* sentenced for  
 Schismaticks, because being within the  
 Diocess of *Carthage*, and so under his in-  
 spection, they notwithstanding gathered to  
 themselves Assemblies, and exercised Mini-  
 sterial Offices without his Authority. And  
 for the same reason *Athanasius* accused *Is-  
 chyras* of Schism, for modelling a Congre-  
 gation in *Mareoles* without any subjection  
 or dependance upon him the Bishop of *Alex-  
 andria*, unto whose Jurisdiction that Coun-  
 trey belonged : for he shews us his Title in  
 these words, 'Εκας ὁ ἡὺς πρεσβυτέρων ἔχει τὰς  
 ἰδίας κώμας, ἀλλὰ τῷ τῆς Ἀλεξανδρείας Ἐποκό-  
 πῳ αἱ ἐκκλησίαι πάσης τῆς χώρας ὑποκύνται' i. e.

Tom. 1. p.  
 781. ad p.  
 802.

All the Presbyters of this Province have  
 their peculiar Cures, or Parishes, but all  
 the Churches of this Region are under the  
 Jurisdiction of the Bishop of *Alexandria*.

And the very same thing *Epiphanius* tells us  
 in his second Book *Adversus Hæreses*,

*Epiphaz.*

*adv. Hæres.*

Tom. 2. p.

727.

Ὅσαι γὰρ ἐκκλησίαι τῆς αἰθιοπικῆς ἐκκλησίας ἐν Ἀλεξ-  
 ανδρείᾳ ὑπὸ ἑνὶ Ἀρχιεπίσκοπον ἔσται, &c.

That  
 there were several Parochial Churches, in  
 which

which the Inhabitants might assemble with greater convenience : and these Congregations were under the Ministry of peculiar Presbyters : but all these Presbyters and their respective Churches were governed by the Superintendence of the Arch-bishop of *Alexandria* : and this was the universal model of unity and order in all other Provinces of the Catholick Church.

Now the Arch-bishops of *Canterbury* and *York* have as much Jurisdiction over the Christians in *England*, as *Athanasius* had over the Province of *Alexandria*, or *St. Cyprian* in the Diocess of *Carthage* : for beside the Right of Church-Government which their succession from the Apostles gives them, they are impowr'd to exercise their Jurisdiction by the Laws of our Christian Prince : and therefore those Societies of Christians living under the Jurisdiction of the Arch-bishops and Bishops of *England*, and yet do separate from their communion and Government, are Schismatics from the Church of *England*. To conclude this, if the *Novations* and *Donatists*, if the five Presbyters of *Carthage*, if *Ischyra* in *Alexandria* were Schismatics ; if from the *Ascension* of our Lord to his second *Advent*, there was, or can be a Schismatick ; then the Sectaries of

*England* are Schismaticks, not only from the Church of *England*, but from the whole Catholick Church.

Having thus stated the antient notion of Schism, and found it a heinous impiety; though our Non-conformists sport with it as an Ecclesiastical Scarecrow; I shall next do them the justice to examine the *Doctors* Plea, and see how well he vindicates them from the guilt of Schism.

First, He denies that there is any such creature as a National stated governing Church of *England*. If the *Doctor* means by all these rumbling Epithetes of stated, National, governing, organical Church of *England*, that there is no such distinct organical Church in *England*, that is, a separate body from the Catholick Church, I am then of his opinion; But if he means, that the Bishops of *England* have no power of Government over the Christians in *England*, it is a very foul mistake, to speak in the modestest phrase: for I have already prov'd that the Arch-bishops and Bishops have as much Jurisdiction in their respective Provinces and Dioceses of *England*, as any other Patriarchs and Bishops of the Catholick Church ever had in theirs: and  
if



if the *Act of Uniformity* be a Law, I am sure there is such an establish'd being as a National Church.

In *Pag. 30.* his gravity drolls, and gives us a very merry Argument to prove that there is no such creature as a National Church of *England* : for, sayes he, *Who so will erect a stated National governing Church in England, must find us an Officer cloathed with Authority to excommunicate from Michael's Mount in Cornwall, to Carlisle in Berwick.* Now Sir, let this pass for a piece of wit, though it is as wide from reason, as *Cornwall* from *Berwick*. What though the Bishop of *Antioch* could not excommunicate from *Antioch* to *Constantinople*, and from thence to the borders of *Persia*, must there therefore be no governing Church in *Greece*? and might the Christians in *Antioch* by that Logick separate themselves from the communion and jurisdiction of their proper Patriarchs without Schism? If our Author could have prov'd, that there were any Provinces, or Natives of *England*, that were *de jure* exempt from the Canons of this Church, and the jurisdiction of the *English* Bishops, then there had been something of argument: But if the *Doctor* for contumacy and disorder should be excommunicated from the

*Pag. 30.*

I believe the Archbishop of *Canterbury* being Primate or Patriarch of all *England*, if he will exert his Authority to the utmost extent, may upon just reason excommunicate any Subject of this Nation.

Church of *England* in *Berwick*, I am sure without absolution, *de jure* he could not communicate with any Assembly of the Church in *England*, though he travail'd from *Berwick* to *Carlisle*, and from thence to *Mount Michael* in *Cornwall*: and this I fancy, does strongly conclude, That the Church of *England* is such a part of the Catholick Church, which hath a proper and peculiar jurisdiction over all the Christians in this Kingdom.

Page 10.  
Sect. 12.

Our Doctor, pag. 10. sect 12. owns it as a confess'd principle, *That every individual member of the Church Catholick visible is bound in duty both to God and his own soul, to joyn himself to some particular Society of Christians, with which he may enjoy all the Ordinances of God, so as may be for his souls advantage.* Well then, why do they not communicate with the Church of *England*, where all the Ordinances of God are observ'd and solemniz'd with as much gravity and faithfulness as in any other part of the Catholick Church?

Page 11.

To this he answers pag. 11. That the business is so stated by the *Act of Uniformity*, that they cannot communicate with us without doing what they judge to be sinful.

There

There is nothing can justly be called sinful, but what transgresses some manifest Law of God or Nature ; and could the *Doctor* have prov'd, that any thing practised or enjoyn'd by the Church of *England*, did violate any of those Divine Rules, his *Plea* had been allowed, and his Party might vindicate their Non-conformity. But to transgress a plain Law of God, to disobey the Orders of our Governours, and yet to give us no better reason for it, than to say, they fancy the things are sinful, is so far from excusing, that it aggravates the guilt. For, **F**irst, Their disobedience is an affront to their Governours, and then the doing this only upon the account of their own judgement or fancy, is an affront to God : for private conscience to usurp the Sovereignty of God, and to lay such Divine Obligations upon the soul and mind, which God never impos'd. The nature and guilt of this disobedience is exactly represented by the story of the young Prophet, *1 Kings* 13. he was sent to prophesie against the Altar in *Bethel* ; now *Jeroboam* having cast off all the Priests and Levites of the *Aaronical* line, and erected a new model of Religion, therefore that the young Prophet might have no communion with so great a Schisma-

Schismatick; God charges him expressly, *Vers. 9. to eat no bread, nor drink water in that place*: now an old Prophet that dwelt in *Bethel* pretends a new Revelation, and that with such cunning delusion, as he prevailed with the young Prophet to go back and dine with him at *Bethel*; but that entertainment cost him his life, *Vers. 24.* The reason of this severity was very just and equitable; for God had given him an express command not to eat in that place, and that charge was reveal'd to him by some such manifest way of Divine Revelation, that he was as much ascertain'd, it was the Word of the Lord, as he was assur'd of his own being: And therefore he was justly punish'd for disobeying a plain command, and hearkening to a pretended Revelation, which was not personally reveal'd to him, and of the truth of which he could not be so much secur'd, as he was of his former Vision. Thus obedience to Governours in general, is as manifest a Law of God as was ever given to the VWorld, and we are in no particular to disobey them, except we can produce another Divine Law of equal evidence and Authority which prohibits our obedience in that particular; or else I believe from the process of the former story, it is displeasing to God to transgress such a plain certain Law,



Law, without a manifest prohibition from Heaven, but only out of niceness of fancy or private judgement. And if the Church should part with all those things which Dissenters judge to be sinful, there could be neither Church nor Government: for we must throw off our Hoods and Surplice to gratifie the Scrupulous Puritan; we must strip our selves stark-naked to satisfy the Fanaticism of the *Adamites*; nay, we must part not only with Rites and Ceremonies, but the whole Liturgie and Hierarchy of the Church, because some fancy them to be Anti-christian; nay, the Creed is not secure, we must expunge the Article of Christs Divinity to humour the *Socinians*; we must blot out the Propitiation of Christ, the Doctrine of the Trinity, and the Resurrection of the body, to gratifie the *Quakers*: and so we must not only deface the front and out-side of the Temple, but even raze it to the ground, because it does not please the eye of these men of *Babel*: nay we must renounce our reason and our senses too to satisfy the *Papists* in the Doctrine of Transubstantiation, and so by this method, at length we must neither be men nor Christians.

But let us put the case at the worst, and  
sup-

suppose what these men fancy, were really true; That there were some things enjoyn'd by the Church, which were really sinful; I confess this would be a difficult and unhappy circumstance, but yet it would not justify a total separation, and the erecting of new modell'd Churches; for I have prov'd before, that we are bound by the eternal reasons of Peace and Order to communicate with those Bishops, and that part of the Catholick Church under which we live: and if it should so happen, that some things evidently sinful were enjoyn'd by this Church, then we might remove into some other part of the Catholick Church, that were of a sounder constitution. But if we continued within the Jurisdiction of this Church, I think we should be oblig'd to communicate with it in Publick Confession of Faith, in Devotions and Sacraments, and as far as we could without manifest sin. We might with peace and patience enjoy a pure conscience in our own family, but it could never be lawful by any rule of Christianity to make a total separation, and to set up another form of Church-Government, in opposition to that under whose Jurisdiction we live.

But Mr. H. in the *Appendix* hath discover'd

ver'd a new Argument to vindicate the Non-conformists in upholding Conventicles distinct from the Assemblies of the Church of England, The summ of his new Invention amounts to thus much.

*That necessity is laid upon them by Di- vine Law to preach the Gospel; as for their communion with our Churches, it is but an humane establishment: Now seeing they cannot preach in our Assemblies, the necessity of a Divine Law obliges them to teach in Conventicles.* Pag. 34, 5, 6.

Now Sir, to encounter this Gigantick reason, we must enquire the truth of his first *Postulatum*, Whether any such necessity be laid upon these men to preach the Gospel?

Indeed I have met with a *Geneva* Divine, that stoutly believes, that necessity was laid upon *Cain* to be a Murderer, and upon *Judas* to be a Traytor: Now I confess if this Divinity be true, they may be under the unavoidable fate of Schism and Rebellion, and then we ought to pity and excuse them, and lay the guilt in Heaven. But I will suppose *Mr. H.* to be too good and modest for to accuse God, to  
acquie

acquit himself. And the necessity he pretends, is founded in their call to the Ministry. Now Sir, there will be a necessity for us to enquire the truth of this Divine Call: for the Parliament were a very *Jewish Sanhedrim* to forbid these men to speak openly in the name of *Jesus*, if they were certainly sent of God. But I shall ask them the same Question concerning their Mission, that our Saviour asked the *Jews* concerning *John's* Baptism, *was it from Heaven, or of men?* If they shall say from men, then they must shew us their orders from the hands of the Bishops, the Apostles Successors, who only have Authority with *Titus* to ordain Elders or Priests in every City: If they say from Heaven, they must then bring us very serious credible Witnesses to assure us, that they were called by a voice from the clouds, as *St. Paul* was in his way to *Damascus*: And yet if this were done, we live in such a Sceptick Age, that men would not credit the Boast of Revelation without the credentials of a Miracle. And I confess I cannot blame the Christian World for this suspecting humour; for so many impostures and delusions have been imposed upon the World by this pretence, that 'tis prudence not to be too credulous.

Now



Now Sir, you may observe, that these fanciful Visions and Revelations have strangely swelled these men; for they are no less in their own opinion, than the great Apostles of Christ, and therefore with St. Paul, they cry out, *Necessity is laid upon us, and wo be unto us if we preach not the Gospel*; that is, Sir, That the Kingdom of England are still Jews and Barbarians; and except these chief Apostles preach the Gospel, there is no hopes of their conversion from Gentilism or Judaism. Nay, pag. 5, 6. he tells us, *That there is such a necessity for these men to preach in Conventicles, that the everlasting welfare of thousands of mens souls depends upon it.* Wo, wo to the King and Parliament, that should dare to stop the mouths of these men, upon whose breath depends the salvation of thousands of souls! Why Sir, this is far more mischievous, than shutting up the Exchequer, breaking the East-India Company, or spoiling all the Trade of England.

But Sir, I hope this dreadful Harangue will not fright you, for all is but noise and canting; for I dare assure you, the Execution of the Law will no way hinder the advancement of the Gospel, nor hazard one

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soul

soul in *England* : for Christianity will be soberly preach'd in *England*, though all these men be silenc'd. And besides, I should think by the principles of *Calvinism*, that the salvation of souls were more fix'd and fatal, than to depend upon the silence or preaching of a few Non-conforming Ministers. You know Sir, the Decree of peremptory Election was dated long before that Reprobate *Act of Uniformity*, and therefore there is no fear of losing one of the elect, though these men be struck dumb : and as for the Reprobates, all the Oratory of Dr. O. and Mr. H. and the rest of those mighty men can never alter their sadder fate. And therefore I think I may conclude from their own Divinity, that there is no necessity laid upon them to preach the Gospel.

Fig. 4. Mr. H. solemnly propound this weighty Question, *which will be most for the glory of God, either for the Non-conforming Teachers to preach the Gospel to their meetings, or to keep the Union of their Parish Churches?*

To which Question there is a very easie Answer; for no doubt, the God of order is more glorified by Unity, peace and Obedi-  
ence

ence to our Governours, than by disorder and confusion, And therefore I shall conclude this by inverting the Argument : They may live in the communion of the Church, without the least hazzard of their salvation; and necessity is laid upon them to obey their Governours; and wo be unto them if they preach the Gospel in Conventicles, and by walking disorderly, trouble the peace and order both of Church and State.

But there is one Plea more for this Schism or Separation, ( call it which you please ) and that is cunningly insinuated in that famous definition of Schism by Mr. *Hales* cited pag. 17. *Schism is an unnecessary separation from that part of the visible Church of which we once were members.* That their separation is unnecessary, let the Doctor himself judge, who pag. 9. tell us, they differ from us only in the insignificant fringes and laces of Forms and Ceremonies. Now I fancy, it were a very unnecessary and undutiful thing, for a Son to disown and desert his Mother, only because the fringe and lace of her garment did not please his eye.

But the mysterie lyès in the last words of the distinction, A separation from that part

of the Church, of which we once were members. Now Sir, there are vast numbers of persons in *England* who were never baptized by the Ministry of the Church of *England*, or had any communion with her, and then by the judgement of Mr. *Hales* cannot be charg'd with Schism or separation from her.

But this is already answer'd, for I have prov'd, that they are bound in duty to live in communion with those Bishops and Priests, or that part of the Catholick Church, under which they reside: and if they never were in the communion of this Church, they have been the longer in disorder and disobedience, and that is a very ill method of excusing the crime.

By this Sophistry Schism can only be the sin of the first generation: *Novatus* and his contemporaries that first departed from the communion of the Catholick Church, were indeed Schismatics, but then those who were baptiz'd and educated by that faction, were never in the communion of the Catholick Church, and so by this argument were free from Schism, and so downwards from generation to generation. Now this looks like Magick, for it teaches us an art how



how to split the Church into a thousand pieces, and to continue this division for ever; and yet in a little while there should be no dis-union: for it is only the adventure of the first Authors to break off from the Catholick Church, but then as many as they propagate to the end of the world are no Schismaticks, because they never had any personal communion.

Now Sir, having asserted that the Unity of the Catholick Church consists not only in the unity of faith, but in a succession of Bishops and Priests, and a regular obedience to their inspection and conduct; give me leave to reflect and consider what direful conclusions our Adversaries may draw from this notion.

First, this will be accused of too much kindness to the Church of *Rome*: for they having continued their succession of Bishops from *St. Peter*, this will acquit them from Schism, and place them within the body of the Catholick Church.

I hope Sir, it will not offend, if we be as kind to the Pope as we are to the Devil, and allow him his due: No doubt, the Church of *Rome* is in the communion of

the Catholick Church, but yet this is no argument for any to desert the Church of *England*, and remove to that of *Rome*; for our Apostolick Succession of Bishops is as authentick as theirs, and our Doctrine more Pure, Primitive and Catholick; and therefore it is irrational for the *Romish* Church to accuse us of Schism; for whatever they can justly plead for their Unity, will equally establish ours with the Catholick Church.

I cannot better represent the present State of the Catholick Church than by an allusion to the *Jewish* Temple: The Church of *England*, we are able to prove, is the purest part of the Catholick Church, being most refined from error and superstition, and therefore that may be resembled to the *Sanctum Sanctorum*; The *Greek* Church though something defiled, yet still preserving the Apostolick faith and succession of Patriarchs and Presbyters, may be compar'd to the *Middle Temple*; The Church of *Rome*, like the *Outward Court*, is most profan'd with the Tables of the Money-changers, and defil'd by abominable superstitions; but yet though it be filthy, it is a part of the building, and within the *Area* of the Temple: But for any to desert the Church of *England*, to communicate with that of  
*Rome*,

*Rome*, is such a frantick humour, as! for a man to quit the neatest apartment, and exchange for the most fluttish room in the same house.

Secondly, That which will raise the greatest clamour is, That by this notion I unchurch all the forreign Reform'd Churches who have no Bishops of the Catholick line to govern them, and ordain their Ministers.

To this I answer, That if any of the forreign Churches have continued a succession of Presbyters, who can derive their Origination from Episcopal Ordination, it something lessens their dis-union, and gives them a remote alliance to the Catholick Church; yet this is but private charity, and will not justify them from Schism by the Canons of the antient Church. But if any of them have a Ministry, which have no other orders than their own Usurpation or popular Election, I know not how to acquit them from being Schismatics from the Catholick Church. And why do not the States of *Holland* send their Professors from *Leyden* to *London* to receive Consecration from the hands of our *English* Bishops, and so engraft themselves again into the unity

of the Catholick Church: this they might easily do, without being oblig'd to any subscriptions to Papal power or innovations; if their omission of this arise from a contempt and abhorrence of Episcopacy, I have no Apology for them, neither would I be in the communion of those Churches for all the Bank of their *East-India* Company. If any of the foreign Churches be under such unhappy circumstances, that they can justly plead a necessity for having no Bishops or Priests of the Apostolick Succession, I have great compassion for them, and question not but God accepts them: for I receive that as an indisputable Maxim, That where there is an inevitable necessity, there can be no guilt, though the fact it self be never so much irregular. But as for those Churches in general, I have *St. Pauls* charity, *Those that are without let God judge.*

Thirdly, Our squeamish Sectaries are offended at the Hierarchy of *England*, because it derives its succession from the Bishops of *Rome*. To which I have a double Answer.

First, That I make not the Chair of *Rome* the sole Head, or Origine of this Catholick succession: for the Episcopal or Apostolick



postolick power of Government and Ordination was equally conferred upon all the Apostles by the general commission of our High Priest *Jesus* : and therefore a succession of Bishops and Priests from any of these Apostles, is enough to assert our unity with the Catholick Church. You know the twelve Apostles are made the twelve foundation stones of the Christian Temple ; and that part of the Church which in a right line is built upon *St. James*, is as much in the unity and compact of the building, as that which stands upon *St. Peter*,

Secondly, Let us grant it, that we claim our succession from the line of *Rome*, this will no way prejudice the Episcopacy of *England* ; I hope it was no dishonour to the Holy *Jesus*, that there were some of his Genealogy that had no very good fame in the World ; it was sufficient, that by that line it was made evident, our Lord sprung from *Judah* : and it is enough for the Bishops of *England* to make it evident, they sprung from the Apostles, and though some of their line were men of impious lives, or erroneous opinions, that no way lessened their power of propagation, nor invalidates the Authority of our succession.

Thus

Thus I have consider'd Schism as a separation from the Bishops and Priests of the Apostolick line, and I see no reason to recant this notion. And therefore the *Appendix* is vastly mistaken, pag. 9. when he tells us, *That if the Parliament did legitimate their Meetings, there were an end of the Schism*: for they might indeed by a Law of Toleration acquit them from all the Temporal penalties of a separation, but it would exceed all the Omnipotency of Parliaments to discharge them from the guilt of Schism: for they must first compel their Teachers to take Episcopal Orders, and bring in all the Conventicles into the communion of the Catholick Church, and place them under the Government of their proper Bishops, or else they would still be Schismatics, *non obstante Statuto*.

Before I conclude, I will consider some grand Absurdities that will follow from the denial of this notion.

First, The profound Fanaticks in *England* clamour against the whole Hierarchy, and will have the whole race of Arch-bishops and Bishops to be Anti-christian. Now Sir, I'll appeal to your judgement, if this  
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be not blasphemy ; for then all the holy Bishops that assembled in the first four General Councils, that did assert the truth of Christianity against Pagans, Jews and Hereticks, and those many Bishops of the antient Church that headed the noble Army of Martyrs, must be damn'd as limbs of Anti-christ : Nay, I cannot see how to defend *Timothy* and *Titus* from being Anti-christian too ; and if these Propagators of the Christian Faith, were Anti-christian, where shall we enquire for Christianity ? Nay, this were a sure foundation for Atheism ; for how can it be reconcil'd to the Providence of a God, or the care of *Jesus*, that he should plant a Kingdom upon earth, with a promise of his presence and most careful providence, and yet to suffer his own Kingdom to be enslav'd under the usurpation of an Anti-Christian yoke for sixteen hundred years together : if this were true, too many wise men would conclude with the fool in the *Psalmist*, *That there is no God.*

Secondly, If this succession of Bishops and Presbyters be not necessary to preserve our unity with the Catholick Church, then the Keys must be thrown away, and excommunication is but an idle impertinence : for if there be not a certain body or corporation  
of

of Christians known by a succession of power and Priesthood from the Apostles, how can it be known, when a person is cast out of the Church ? for if the Christian Church be like a Wilderness, where every family may pitch their Tent where they please, there is no use of Keyes to so wide a desert,

Thirdly, If this succession be not necessary, how can any rational man be ever satisfied in the administration of Ministerial Offices, as Sacraments, and Absolution, when there is no certain rule in the world by which he can rationally be assured of the regular Authority of him that ministers ?

To conclude this, if this notion of unity be disown'd, then every Conventicle is a true Church ; and every man whom himself or the people fancy inspir'd must be receiv'd for a Prophet ; and God must lose one of his Titles, The God of Order ; and Confusion must be believ'd to be an Ordinance of Heaven.

Before I conclude, give me leave to reverse the *Doctor*, and make his Front the Rear : (Sir, the phrase may be allow'd,) for if I mistake not, the Author has been a man



man of War, and understands very well the Martial Dialect.

The Harangue with which the *Doctor* prefaces his *Plea*, may justly be inverted.

It was doubtless one of the greatest felicities that ever befel the whole body of people in these three Nations, that when in the year 1662. Religion was so happily settled in Faith, Worship and Government, according to the pattern of the antient Catholick Church in the first three Centuries, and though this Religion was ratified by the very hand of God, and the dry bones reviv'd by the Miracle of an unexpected Re-stitution, that yet there should be amongst us so many thousands of such perverse and sullen Tempers, as not to be perswaded into the Churches communion neither by Law, Reason, nor Miracle.

I cannot discern the *Doctors* ingenuity in *Page 2.* his second *Section*, where he originates the *Act of Uniformity* in the anger, ambition and covetousness of Church-men, and allows our Governours not one grain of Prudence or Piety in the composition of that Law.

He

Pag. 2.

He first takes notice of the anger that rested in the bosom of Church-men, who had been sufferers. Methinks those men who had invaded the Rights and Revenues of the Loyal Clergy should have been content with the publick remission and charity of the *Act of Indemnity*, and not expect a Miracle, that the *Act of Oblivion* should quite destroy the Church-mens memories: for these ploughers had ploughed such deep furrows upon the Churches back, that it was impossible such impressions should soon wear out. The Doves were driven from their nest, and their feathers of Gold pluck'd off by those ravening Vultures, and they were forc'd (in the *Psalmist's* language) to lye among the pots. And yet after all this, they must not so much as reflect upon all those rapines, nor express any prudent caution against these Birds of prey, but they must presently be accused of having too much gall.

Pag. 2.

His next charge is against the Zeal of Church-men to continue some Bishops the repute of Martyrs, who had suffer'd for the vigorous enforcing of some of the things now enjoyn'd.

I observe, the *Doctor* very warily covers the Blood of *Charles* the First, but dares dip his fingers in that of the Bishops; and yet I believe, the King as well as the Bishop is left out from his Martyrologie. Had the Bishops impos'd such Rites and Innovations as had been inconsistent with the reverence of Religion and the nature of Christianity; had they urged such Observances which had never been practis'd in the Catholick Church, nor required by the Church of *England*: truly then the blood of Arch-bishop *Laud* should have no Rubrick in my Kalendar, for then he had suffered as an evil doer. But when those things required, were founded upon good reasons of Religion, the custom of the antient Church, and enjoyn'd by the just Authority of this Nation, I think the Arch-bishop who had the hard fate to fall in doing of his duty, may ( in a sober sense ) be said to suffer for righteousness sake, and be allowed the honour of some kind of Martyrdom. Sir, I do hear declare my self an eternal enemy to that Religion, which can consecrate Sacrilege, hallow Rebellion, and sanctifie Rapine and Injustice. Nor will I ever have any communion with those men, who Canonize the most infamous Traytors and  
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Murderers for Saints, and condemn the best King and Bishop in the World for Malefactors: I don't see, but by the Theorems of this Jewish Divinity, *Barabbas* might have been Sainted, and *Christ* recorded for an Impostor.

The next accusation brought against Church-men, is their desire of filthy Lucre. I confess, Covetousness is one of the greatest shames of humane Reason, and that it is a most absurd impertinence to see Spiritual men so fond upon the things of earth. But if that must be called a desire of filthy Lucre, when a man perhaps a little too passionately desires and enjoys his own just Rights and Properties, then sure it was the foulest Lucre, for those men to invade the Revenues of the Church, to which they had no Title, neither by the Law of God, nor the Statutes of the Nation: Sure none but a Pharisee could have overseen so vast a beam in his own eye, and taken such great notice of a little spot in his Brothers.

The *Acts of Uniformity* and that against Private Meetings, are describ'd as Severe and Tragick, as if they had been the Edicts of *Nero* or *Dioclesian*. I do believe, had the



the very same Laws been by the *Roman* Emperours imposed upon the Catholick Church in the first three hundred years, they would have made a Jubilee, and have been celebrated by the antient Christians with Hymns and Hallelujahs : The Sentiments of these men differ so much from the judgement of the antient Christians, as if they were not of the same Religion. And Sir, you may remember some Ordinances of Parliament that did more bloody execution, than all the Laws and Canons Royal of *England*. Sure you have not forgot, when Loyalty to our Prince, and faithfulness to the establish'd Religion was damn'd for Malignancy ; and the Loyal Nobility, Gentry and Clergy of *England* were condemn'd to Axes and Halters, Plunderings and Sequestrations, Prisons and Banishment. And yet all these Tragick Scenes must have a silken curtain drawn over them, and must be interpreted as expresses of holy zeal, and rigour and persecution charg'd only upon the *Acts of Uniformity* and that against Conventicles.

From pag. 3. to pag. 7. the *Doctor* labours to assert the great numbers of Non-conformists, and insinuates, that the prudence of our Governours could never have passed the

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*Act*

*Act of Uniformity*, if they had not been misinformed, that the numbers of Non-conformists were very inconsiderable.

I confess, in State Logick number is a weighty argument, and in Politicks it must be thought imprudence, to disoblige a numerous party, who are able to affront their Governours, and cast away their cords from them; *Cum plurimi peccant impunes sunt*: But whether the establishing parties and divisions by a Law, do consist with the Piety of a Christian Prince, I shall leave to your Judgement to Enquire. But I see by the *Doctor's* Maxims of Prudence, if the World run after the Beast, it is but the duty and wisdom of the Kings of the Earth to fall down and worship him: and if the *Arrian* faction be great and popular, it is Prudence in *Constantinus* to Arrianize.

It is worth observing, how these men to serve their Interest can quit their old appropriation of the little flock, and to make themselves formidable, will appear as the *Syrians*, that cover the Land. But this Popish Argument of Number, is never urg'd but upon design; for it is confess'd, Multitude is no infallible argument of truth, for Anti-christ will out-poll us.

He

He complains, that there is a vast number of Atheistical livers, that seldom or never resort to publick worship; and yet these escape the Indictments of Law and Censures of the Church; but all the arrows are made ready against the servants of the Living God. Whether the Title of the Servants of God, which these men appropriate to themselves, be not a Presumption, I shall leave to be examin'd by Omniscience: But I am sure, they are guilty of some actions of so bad a tincture that may make the World justly suspect, they wear the Livery of another Master.

But if there be a remissness of Government in *England*, or a connivance to Atheistical Separatists, it is our complaint and lamentation as well as theirs. The *Doctor* in the same Section makes the number of the Atheists in *England* not inferiour to the Non-conformists: And then by the late insinuation their number will likewise plead for Toleration, and it will not be prudence to molest them. And where there are many Sectaries, it is no wonder there should be as many Atheists. You know Sir, it was remarked by a very observing Gentleman, *That there were more Atheists in*  
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*the Seven Provinces, than in the rest of Christendom : ( we must now except England )* and he gives us this reason for his conjecture, That there were so many Religions, that there were great numbers of men that were of none at all.

Sir, There are many impertinencies in that little Book, which I thought not worthy the examination, and which your Judgement will easily answer from the grounds of this discourse : Such is his branding Parish Churches for a Popish invention, which any sober man would rather have thought to have been the contrivance of Reason and convenience ; for we find this invention elder than the Pope ; for they were founded in the Province of *Alexandria* in the dayes of *Athanasius*, as *Athanasius* and *Epiphanius* inform us.

Such another impertinence is his tedious Harangue about Separation from Parochial Organical Churches, which no way concern the constitution of the Catholick Church, or the Church of *England* : for though deserting our Parish Church in some circumstance may be a disorder, yet it is no Schism if we communicate with any other regular Assembly of the same communion.



munion. *Athanasius* does not accuse *Ischy-  
ras* of Schism, for separating from his Pa-  
rochial Congregation and Priest, but for ere-  
cting a Conventicle, and dividing from the  
Bishop, and the whole Catholick Church in  
*Alexandria*.

As for Mr. *H*'s Discourse about the Obligation of Humane Laws, I shall refer him for an Answer to St. *Paul* and Bishop *Sander-  
son*; and when they are answered we must enquire further.

I take no notice of the Ralery against Ceremonies. The necessity of them in Publick Worship, and the Authority of the Church in enjoining them is substantially prov'd by Mr. *Hooker*, and lately by Mr. *Falkner*; and if their Reasons will not prevail, I will not pretend to work a Miracle, or hope to open the eyes of them, who are resolv'd to be blind.

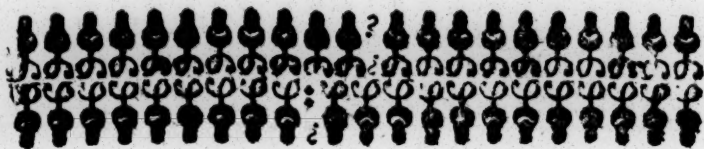
Sir, I hope that these Papers will satisfy you, that these men are Schismaticks, and assure you that I am,

SIR,

Your faithful Friend  
and Servant,

R. C.





*Honoured Sir,*

**T**Here lately came to my hand the Works of Mr. *Hales*, Entituled *Golden Remains*. The most Sacred of these Reliques, is a little Tract of *Schism*, which you find celebrated by the High and Mighty *Transproser*, and applauded by your *Doctor of Divinity*, and is the fam'd Sanctuary of our dividing Parties. Therefore having some Months since presented you with my thoughts concerning Schism, I thought my self oblig'd to an impartial perusal of this Famous Tract, for fear I might through weakness of judgement have impos'd an error upon you and my self. I found the *Remains* of Mr. *Hales* prefac'd with so vast an *Encomium* of the Author, that I address'd my self to his Tract of *Schism* with a very awful reverence: resolving to submit to the clearest

Reasons, and not to be ashamed to be convinced by a Person of that admir'd Acuteness. But having with the most strict intention considered that Discourse, I find my notion of Schism left untouched.

But because our Non-conformists so oft Appeal to this Tractate, I resolv'd to consider how far it could serve their Interest, and justify their Separation.

*pag. 2.* First, therefore he informs us, That there are two things which serve to compleat a Schism.

1. The choice of a Bishop in opposition to the former.

2. The erecting of a Church or Oratory for the dividing parties to meet in.

Now I acknowledge this notion of Schism to be both Antient and Orthodox: Schism being considered as a breach of charity, or a dissolving of that Bond of Peace, which we are so often solemnly charged to preserve inviolate. And without a great and evident necessity, this dividing must be very displeasing unto the Prince of Peace, who



who did command us to *be One, even as He and the Father are One*. Of this nature was the Schism of the *Arrians, Miletians* and *Donatists* at their first dividing : They set up Altar against Altar, had Bishops of their own party, and their peculiar Oratories, and would have no communion with the Bishops or Assemblies of that standing part that alwayes called themselves the Catholick Church.

The Church of *England* by the title of long prescription and the establishment of a Law, is the standing Church of this Nation, with which all the people of this Kingdom are bound to communicate; But our Non-conformists have chosen to themselves Pastors in opposition to the Bishops and Priests of the Church of *England*, and have erected their distinct Congregations to confront our Church Assemblies, and therefore by Mr. *Hales's* definition they are guilty of compleat Schism.

But Sir, it must be observ'd, that these men have run further than the *Arrians, Miletians* and *Donatists* did at their first dividing : for though they had so little charity as for a matter of dispute, to divide from

from the communion of the other part of the Church, yet they had so much Prudence, as they preserv'd to themselves some Bishops and Priests who had receiv'd their Consecration and Orders from the Catholick Church ; and when their Bishops and Priesthood were worn out, the Factions expir'd ; for they were not arriv'd to such a height of Fanaticism, as to think themselves a Church without the Government and Priesthood of the Apostolick line. No, they were so sacred and curious in this, that I find the *Arrians* cavilling at the Ordination of *Athanasius*, as not being Catholick and Canonical ; just as the *Papists* objected against us the *Naggs-head* Consecration. And (by the way) that was the most weighty and considerable attempt that ever *Rome* made upon the Church of *England*: and could they clearly have invalidated and disannull'd our succession of Bishops and Priesthood, all the learning of *England* could not have prov'd us a Catholick Church. But this Cavil was with demonstration confuted by that elaborate Piece of Mr. *Mason* Arch-Deacon of *Norfolk*. Sir, I hope that the merit of this Digression will beg its own pardon.

But

But to return to our *English* Sectaries ; according to Mr. *Hales's* notion, it would be indeed a very unhappy Schism in the Church of *England*, for the Bishop of *Norwich* and his Presbyters and Jurisdiction, to divide from the communion of the Archbishop of *Canterbury*, and to set up a Church of the *East Angles* divided from that of the *West*. But supposing this, there were yet left to us this satisfaction, that we were still under the Government and Ministry of that Bishop and Priesthood, of whose Consecration and Orders we were sufficiently assur'd ; and though this would be an unlucky Faction in the *English* Hierarchy, yet it would be no Schism from the Catholic Church.

But our Separatists are run to a further distance ; for they have not set up Altar against Altar, or one Bishop in opposition to another, but have thrown off all the Bishops and Priests of the Apostolick Succession, and have erected a Synagogue against the Church, and set up a Lay-Elder in opposition to the Bishop and Priest. And this is not only a disobedience against the Laws, and a Schism from the establish'd Church  
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of *England*, but is a separation from the Catholick Church. And seeing our Sectaries have no Priesthood, I believe their Conventicles to be no more a Church, than a Club of Mechanicks in a Coffee-house. For though some of these Congregations may retain Imposition of hands as a mockery of Ordination, yet the imposing of Lay-hands have no more power to confer Priesthood, than I have to constitute a Judge of *Oyer and Terminer*.

Page 1.

Mr. *Hales* makes Schism and Sedition of a very resembling nature: He tells us, *That Sedition is a Lay Schism, and Schism is an Ecclesiastical Sedition*. Now, 'tis true, it would be a great Sedition to set up a Prince of the Blood in opposition to our Sovereign, who by long and Legal Investiture hath been possessed of Regal Supremacy: But it would be Sedition of a deeper dye, to renounce all Allegiance to our Prince, and to cast off the whole Royal Line, and to set up a Foreigner, or one who had no alliance to the Royal Blood.

Thus, if to set up one Bishop in opposition to another (though both be of the same Apostolick succession) if this be a Schism



Schism and a great disorder, then sure, for our Sectaries to cast off all the Bishops and Priests of the Catholick Church, and to set up such Teachers and Governours, who have no relation to the Sacerdotal Line, this must be *ἁπλῶς ἐξώτερον* the outmost and most Schismatical separation from the Catholick Church.

But Mr. *Hales* proceeds and gives us a distinction of Schism. *There is a Schism, where only one part is the Schismatick, for where the occasion is necessary, there not he that separates, but he that is the cause of the Separation is the Schismatick.*

This shall be allowed to be Orthodox too : and when our Non-conformists can demonstrate, that it is necessary for them to separate from the Church of *England*, we will take off the Indictment, and absolve them from Schism. But they must prove this necessity from weightier Topicks than Fringe and Lace. They must make it evident, that they cannot communicate with us, without manifest dishonour to God, affront to *Jesus* and his holy Religion, and evident hazard of their salvation. But this can never be prov'd, but from the New Gospel

spel of private Conscience ; for I am sure the Church of *England* is so happily constituted, that there is no Law nor Canon in the four *Evangelists*, or in the Apostolick *Acts* or *Epistles*, that will justify a separation from it, much less vote it to be necessary.

Secondly, our Author tells us, *That there is a Schism in which both parties are the Schismatics ; for where the occasion of Separation is unnecessary, neither side can be excused from the guilt of Schism.* An instance of this he gives us in that great division between the *Eastern* and *Western* Churches about the Observation of *Easter*.

I confess I can make no Defence for the Churches of the *East* or *West* for that uncharitable division upon the account of a different Ceremony ; for sure the several parts of the Catholick Church might have enjoy'd their peculiar Rites and usages, and yet preserv'd an entire peace and universal communion. I am of *St. Austin's* mind,

*Epist. 118. Totum hoc genus liberat habet observationes, nec Disciplina ulla est in his melior gravi prudentique Christiano, quam ut eo modo*  
*agat*

*agat quo agere viderit Ecclesiam ad quamcunque forte devenerit.*

But how this Instance of the Paschal Schism should be improv'd to serve the Interest of our *English* Sectaries, I can no way discern. He that can from hence extract a Plea for our Non-conformists, must have greater skill in Theological Chymistry, than I dare pretend to. For though this unhappy controversie occasioned a breach of charity and communion, yet here was no departure from the Catholick Church on either side, nor any violation of Order and Government; for the Christians of the *East* observ'd the Canons and Customs of the *Eastern* Church, and submitted themselves to the Government and Ministry of those Bishops and Priests, in whose Jurisdiction they liv'd, and so likewise in the *west*, *vice versa*. And would our Non-conformists learn but so much Order and Obedience, there were an end of the Schism.

Thus I have consider'd the Theorems of our Admir'd Author, and I find no mischief in them; but there are still behind such a Train of consequences, as (in my opinion) are of very evil insinuation, and do  
no

no way merit to be reckon'd among his *Golden Remains*.

I cannot approve of his severe Censure upon the Antient Church, upon the account of the Paschal difference : for he interprets that Breach to be a just judgement of God, ( But then, Sir, mark the Provocation ) *because* ( sayes he ) *that through sloth and blind obedience, men examin'd not the things which they were taught : but like Beasts of Burden, patiently couch'd down , and indifferently underwent whatever their Superiours laid upon them.*

I abhor the Barbarity of rifling Sepulchres, or disturbing the Ashes of the Dead. But I wish our ingenious Author had invented some kinder Emblems for the Antient Christians , than Ases and Camel. For though they were so humble and peaceable, as quietly to submit to the Orders of their Spiritual Governours, yet they were not so tame as to truckle to an Idol, though commanded to couch by *Imperial Injunctions*.

I will never plead for a brutish inadvertency, or a blind and unchristian obedience  
to



to our Superiours. The Church provides by a Canon, that all Christians should once be *Catechumeni*, instructed in the plain Fundamentals of Faith and Piety; and therefore it is not intended, that men should be impos'd upon in matters that concern their common salvation, and there is great reason, that in things of that moment men should be cautious and inquisitive. But I believe that Apostolick Canon, *Let all things be done in Decency and Order*, hath left a great scope to the wisdom of our Superiours, to order the publick Administrations of Religion. And in institutions of this nature (the people being secured of all the pure necessities to salvation) I don't think they are oblig'd to any further examination, their greatest duty in this case is a quiet submission. The Gentile Christians of *Antioch*, knew themselves to be free'd from all Jewish or Levitical Observances, but yet when the Council at *Jerusalem* for prudential Reasons and considerations enjoyn'd them the Abstinence from Blood and things offered to Idols, we don't read, that they enquir'd any further, but quietly obeyed that Canon, and yet I hope those primitive Christians deserv'd a better name and character than Beasts of Burden in matters of

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this nature, I cannot yet discern the guilt or irreligion of a blind obedience.

I could wish that all Christians would keep the common Faith, and practise the plain Rules of Christian Religion, and these things being preserv'd entire, I see no mischief if in other things we should leave our Superiours to govern, and submit even with blind obedience, and not trouble our selves and the World with nice and scrupulous examinations. Blind or unexamining obedience to our Superiours, with those limitations I have stated, would so much assure the peace and order of the Church, that if it were not a vertue, yet I am sure it would be a lesser crime, than Pride, Schism or obstinate disobedience.

Our Author reflects again upon the Paichal Schism in these words,

3. *We may plainly see the danger of our Appeal to Antiquity for Resolution in controverted Points of Faith, and how small Relief we are to expect from them; for if the Direction of the chiefest Guides and Directors of the Church, did in a point so Trivial so mainly fail them, can we without the*

*the imputation of great Grossness and Folly, think so poor-spirited Persons competent Judges of the Questions now on foot between the Churches? Pardon me, I know what temptation drew that note from me.*

Now Sir you may perceive that the Author was very sensible, that there was some such guilt in this passage, as would stand in need of pardon; And therefore if you dare adventure the scandal of giving pardon to a man, after he is dead, you may remit this guilty passion of Mr. *Hales*: for my part, I have charity for him, because he tells us, that this expression was drawn from him, by some vehement Temptation. And you know, that a very great Apostle under a Temptation denyed the Son of God; and if this Good man in such a Hurricane, Renounced all the Fathers of the Church, this should plead for our compassion.

What that particular Temptation was that occasioned this Ecstasie, he was not pleas'd to acquaint us, and therefore I cannot determine, but give me leave to conjecture. I find Mr. *Hales* had the ill Destiny to be a member of the *Belgick* Synod,

and he informs us in his Epistles, that it was sometimes his Province, to refute the Arguments of the *Remonstrants*, (*Hofte absente.* ) Now perhaps , observing that those poor-spirited Antients, would not be press'd into the *States* service, but were all of a different opinion from that Synod, who knows but this unlucky contradiction, and his conversing too much with *Dammannus*, might put him into an unwary heat, and make him Reprobate all Antiquity ? Our Church has so much Reverence for the Antients, as in her publick Articles to own the Authority of the first four General Councils, and King *James* himself would never impose upon us the Novel Decrees of *Dort*.

I confess Sir, ever since I understood Greek, I have had the Grossness and Folly (as Mr. *H.* interprets it ) to have more value for the Judgement of St. *Cyril* of *Jerusalem*, St. *Gregory Nazianzen* and St. *Chrysostome*, than for the opinion of *Bogermannus*, *Sybrandus*, *Beza* or *Gomarus*. I have been so silly as to think the Antient, Catholick Council of *Nice* ( that was but three Centuries remov'd from the Apostles ) did merit more Authority and esteem in the  
Chri-



Christian Church, than that partial and Modern Assembly of *Dort*. And I cannot yet alter my persuasion. But I would gladly quit my self from those ugly imputations of Grossness and Folly.

I must therefore examine the Arguments of Mr. *Hales*, by which he invalidates the Authority of the Antients.

First, He accuses them for Poor-spirited Persons. Indeed they never were so daring as to be so bold with the Attributes of God, as the *Dutch* Professors were in the Synod of *Dort*, or as *Beza* was in *Geneva*: but yet these poor-spirited men had the Resolution to be Martyrs for the Name of *Jesus*; and that Sir, I should think, is a very divine and noble piece of Gallantry. Besides, some of them left to the World their *Golden Remains*, excellent Monuments of their Piety and Learning, as worthy as our Authors.

Secondly, But his great Argument against Appealing to the Judgement of the Antients, is their indiscretion about that trivial matter of the observation of *Easter*.

The Churches of the *East* and *West*, were not without some plausible reasons, for their different observance of that Festival, and though they will not amount to a substantial Apology for that Controversie; yet they will something help to lessen the vastness of the Indiscretion; for the *Eastern* Church had been taught by the Apostles, an innocent compliance to the *Jews* in those Quarters, that they might not scandal them by a sudden and total departure from all the Mosaical Rites and Observances; and therefore the Christians in the *East* governed them by St. *Pauls* Rule of complaisance, to the *Jews* they so far became *Jews*, as to celebrate the *Easter* Festival, upon the fourteenth Month, when the *Jews* observ'd their Paschal. And though I confess, that Reason was out of force in two or three Centuries, yet Sir, you know, Custom has a Great Empire upon wiser creatures, than Beasts of Burden: and therefore it was no Prodigy of imprudence, nor any Divine Judgement, if they were so tenacious of an Antient custom, that had a very innocent and Apostolick Foundation. The *western* Church being at a great distance from *Palestine*, was never oblig'd to that compliance to the *Jews*: But being left  
to

to their Christian Liberty, and assured by an infallible Oracle, That our Lord arose from the Dead upon the first day of the Week, therefore they judged it most apposite and rational, to celebrate the Anniversary Feast of the Resurrection, upon a *Dies Dominicus*,

This appear'd so reasonable to that excellent Prince *Constantine* the Great, that with great Resolution he oppos'd the Jewish compliance of the Eastern Christians, and in his General Epistle concerning the Transactions of the Council of *Nice*, he dissuades the Christian Church from that custom, *Itaque nihil vobis commune sit cum infestissima Judæorum Turba*——

*Domini Percussoribus*. And besides his Imperial Ratification of the Canon of *Nice*, he enforces a General Uniformity in the Observation of *Easter*, by a very plausible Reason, in the same Epistle.—— *Unam*

*esse Catholicam suam Ecclesiam voluit, cujus tametsi partes in multis variisque sunt dispersæ locis, uno tamen spiritu, hoc est, Divino Arbitrio fovetur. Consideret porro sanctitatis vestræ solertia, quam grave sit & indecorum, per eosdem Dies, alias quidem jejuniis intentos esse, alios vero vacare conviviiis,*

*Niceph. l. 3.  
c. 25.*

*Lang. Int.*

*convivis.* All I design by this, is, to shew that there was so much Plausibility on each side, that there was something in the case more than Trifle, and not such monstrous Grossness and Folly as our Author represents.

But grant this Controversie to be trivial, and the Antients indiscreet in the manage of it, yet I cannot discern the Logick of his conclusion, that therefore they are not to be appeal'd unto in any controversie of Religion.

The sense of this Argument amounts to thus much, Because the wisest and most learned men, have sometimes their mistakes and indiscretions, therefore their Judgement is never to be regarded in any matter of moment, I fancy the World would find vast inconveniencies by such a consequence.

Sir, I request you to lend me your Italian *Boccaline*, for the Conventions of *Parnassus* have now as much Authority as the four first General Councils, and sure there will not be so much Grossness and Folly, in Appealing to the Sentence of  
*Apollo,*



*Apollo*, as in consulting the Judgement of the poor-spirited Antients. Pray search the Rolls of *Parnassus*, that we may know whether, *Apollo* have recorded Bishop *Jewel*, and all the Champions of the Reformation for Fools and Asses ; for I observe they were all so impertinent, as in the controversy with *Rome* to Appeal very often to the Judgement of the Antient Fathers.

Learned *Chamier* in his מנחת (for antiquity sake I have chosen the Hebrew Tom. 1. Title) disputing *de usu Canonis*, censures Lib. 10. his *Romish* Adversaries, for declining the Cap. 5. Judgement of the Antients in that Contro- Sect. 1. versie, *Dissimulant Adversarii hanc tantam Antiquorum Testimoniorum & copiam, & vehementiam : ut solent à solis Radiis oculos avertere, quibus lippitudo est incommoda.*

There are two Cases in which we Appeal to the old Catholick Fathers.

1. In Controversies of Faith, or the great Doctrines of Christian Religion.

2. Concerning the Government, Customs

# stome and Discipline of the Antient Church.

Now the great Dispute is, Whether we may appeal to their judgement in matters of Faith. And here I will freely trust you with my Sentiments. My Belief of the great Fundaments and Doctrinals of Christianity is founded upon those Divine Oracles of the Holy Scriptures: But my Perswasion is much help'd and establish'd by the universal consent of the old Catholick Church in the same Articles. For I consider, that the Antients of the first four Centuries, liv'd very nigh the time of the first Promulgation of Christianity, when the Sense of the Apostolick Age, was yet fresh and early. And I am hugely confirm'd by observing, that the old *Greek* Fathers and Councils expounded the Creed just as we do: for sure they must in reason be suppos'd to understand the Idiom of their own Language, and therefore to interpret the Mysteries of the Gospel better than we, who are so many Ages remov'd from the first Revelation, and are but Forreigners to that Language in which the Gospel was writ.

There

There is still a controverſie on foot in the Churches (to uſe the Phraſe of our Author) concerning the eternal Divinity of *Jeſus* the ſon of God, and the Reſurrection of the Fleſh is ſtill called in Queſtion. Now though my Belief of theſe two Articles, is primarily founded upon the Sacred Scriptures, yet that which makes up my Plerophorie, is the authority of the Ancients. For though the Sacred Writings appear very expreſs in thoſe two Articles, yet I have ſeen all thoſe Texts ſo cunningly evaded by the plauſible interpretations of the *Socinians*, that I confeſs it is great ſatisfaction to me, that the ancient Catholick Church did in General Councils maintain thoſe Articles and expound the Holy Text in that ſenſe which we receive. I was about to have concluded this with an old ſentence of *Vincentius Lyrinenſis*; but I conſider'd, that to prove the Authority of the Ancients, by an ancient Author, would be falſe Logick, and a groſs impertinence; and I am very ſhye of thoſe ill-looking imputations. Therefore I will end with the authority of the great *Chamier*, who was but a Modern Divine, and of the Reformed *Galli-*

can Church, and I hope our Appeal to him will be allowed.

Tom. I Lib.  
16. cap. 5.  
§ 5.

In the controverſie *De Scriptura interpretatione*, he diſcourſes of the ſeveral helps to a right interpretation of Scripture, and among the reſt mentions the judgement of the Antients. *Alter ordo veterum eſt, atque eorum qui noſtram ætatem præceſſerunt. Horum labores nemo pius dubitat, Deum extare voluiſſe, ut qui viventes profuerunt Eccleſiæ, mortui non ſint inutiles. Juvat ergo: & valdè quidem juvat, ſciſcitari quid ſenſerint olim boni Patres, tum de fidei Articulis, tum de ſingulorum Scriptura locorum interpretatione; neque eorum Teſtimonium parvi faciendum, multò minus rejiciendum abſque graviſſimâ Ratione, eſi non debeant fidei noſtræ dominari.*

This learned man was under no temptation as our Author was, and therefore expreſſes his opinion of the Antients with much Reason and Reverence: and therefore if I have been guilty of Groſſneſs and Folly in my appeal to Antiquity, you ſee Sir, I have very Learned Fools to bear me company.



2. Our next Appeal to 'Antiquity is in the Questions concerning the antient Government and Discipline of the Catholick Church.

Methinks there should be no dispute concerning the Equity or Reasonableness of our Appeal in this case. For all Courts of Justice, in a Question concerning an antient custom or practice, do constantly pass sentence, according to the Testimonies of the most aged men. And though we should grant, that the antient Fathers were not wise enough to be Judges, yet sure their very antiquity makes them the most competent Witnesses of the Government and Practice of the Church, in the first Ages of Christianity.

What authority have we for Infant Baptism, the Lords Day, the dispensing the Eucharist to Women, but the Authority and Practice of the Antients?

Sir, you see our House of Peers, when their Priviledges were questioned by the Commons, thought it the most rational Method to determine that controversie, by an Appeal to antient Presidents. And if our Protesting Lords would be as just to the Church, as they are to their own Court, and allow the antient Records of the Catholick Church to be as Sacred, as the  
old

old Rolls of Parliament, they would have oblig'd themselves never to alter Episcopal Government. For we can shew more numerous, and far more ancient Monuments to prove the Primitive and continued Jurisdiction of Bishops, than their Lordships can produce, to assert their peculiar Privileges.

But Sir, if you would more clearly understand this necessity or usefulness of appealing to the Antients, let me humbly offer this advice. I know your Temper is serious and contemplative, but I advise you upon this special occasion to compose your mind into an extraordinary Fixation; and when you are retired, and your eyes shut, and your arms folded, Then think out of the World all Councils and Fathers, Fancy we had no more notice of the Judgement or Practice of the Antients, than *Origen* had of his State of Pre-existence; Suppose this present Age of the Church to have no Monument of Christian Antiquity, but the Gospels and Epistles in *Greek*, and no skill in that Language, but what we learned from Pagan Orators, Poets and Philosophers: And at my next Visit pray acquaint me

me with the Result of your thoughts; Whether in those considerations you did not fancy a strange Darknes upon the face of *Christendome*, and see a necessity of a New Revelation to interpret the Old.

Our Author proceeds and tells us; *He sees no Reason, why opinionum varietas & opinantium unitas should be adversa, why we might not differ in opinion, and yet communicate in Sacris.*

The Honour of God and Religion have so much suffered by our Divisions, that I wish with St. Paul, Rom. 15. 6. *That we might with one mind and with one mouth Glorifie God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.* But since our controversies in Religion are so far multiplied, that there is no hope the Christian World should ever unite in one judgement, without the force of a Miracle, yet it would be happy if all Christians would quietly enjoy their Differences of Opinion, and be so far of one mind, as to go up together to the Temple to pray and communicate with the Catholick Church in *Sacris.*

The

The Church of *England* retains no Sacraments, but those which have the manifest Authority of Divine Institution. All the Prayers of this Church are immediately directed to the Eternal God : and all presented in the Name of *Jesus*. We Petition for nothing, but what the Religion of *Jesus* allows us to supplicate. And therefore I see no reason why all the People of this Nation, who are not Atheists and Anti-christian, should not communicate with us in those confessed Services of Prayers, Praises and Sacramentals.

And this is all that is required by that Tyrannical *Act of Uniformity*. And therefore that great Popular Orator in his late Harangue to the House of Lords has imposed a Fallacy upon us, For he passionately complains against the Law, for *devesting the People of their Properties, only because they cannot agree with Church-men in some uncertain Opinions of Religion.*

I hope it will not amount to *scandalum Magnatum* to say, that this is meer Sophistry.



Sophistry. For our Laws prosecute no man for difference of Opinion; no, so far from this, that the very *Act* against *Conventicles* allows our Dissenters, not only their different Opinions, but the quiet use and enjoyment of their several Religions in their own Families; nay, it granted them a further Favour and Liberty, that they might receive four or five more of the same dissenting Brotherhood, to make the exercise more full and satisfying. Here was nothing prohibited but noise and multitude. But they might notwithstanding that Law have peaceably enjoyed their different Opinions and Property too (that great Fundamental of State Religion.) The Church doth not put the Souls of men upon the Rack, or command an exact consent to all her Publick Articles; but indulges a difference of Opinion: it only provides for the Beauty, Order and Solemnity of Publick Worship, by enjoyning all the Christians of this Kingdom to communicate with us in those common *Sacra*, that all sober Christians acknowledge to be of universal obligation.

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But

But here your *Doct̃or* would Rejoyn, that it is as far from *Cornwall* to *Berwick*, as from *Berwick* to *Cornwall*, and demand a Reason, why we do not exercise as much charity to others, as we expect to our selves, or why we should not with as much Reason be obliged to communicate with their Assemblies, as to expect them to be present at ours? For our Author was so kind to Dissenters, as he tells us, *He sees no Reason why we should not mix with those divided Assemblies, where there was nothing done, but what True Piety and Devotion would brook.*

If I may credit my own Conscience, I have a very serious love and veneration for all True Piety and Devotion. But I am resolved to have no communion with Conventicles, and will faithfully acquaint you with my Reasons for that Resolve.

First, My ears are not fitted for the unintelligible Rapsodies of Enthusiastick Divinity. Nothing impresses upon me, but what my Reason and Judgement can give a sober account of. And I am  
sure,

sure, there are many Assemblies in *England*, called Religious Meetings, whose chiefest Devotions consist in nothing but Froth and Groans (to borrow an odd phrase from our Author.)

Secondly, I will appeal from our Author, to Mr. *Hales*, who towards the end of this *Tract* gives us a very Orthodox Definition of a Conventicle. *A Conventicle is a Congregation of Schismatics, or all Meetings upon unnecessary separation, (and concludes) that it is not lawful, no not for Prayer, for Hearing, for Conference, or for any other Religious Office whatsoever, for the People to Assemble otherwise, than by Publick Order is allowed.*

Now since I can enjoy a communion with the Catholick Church, and all the advantages of Christianity, without going to a Conventicle; I think it were neither Piety nor Devotion for me to communicate with those Congregations, which our Author grants to be unlawful Assemblies. Had I lived in the dayes of *Dioclesian*, I would have been a member of the *Ecclesia Subterranea*, and have

assembled with the Catholick Christians in Caves and Grotto's, which necessity had consecrated into Holy Places : But since it is my happy Lot to live in that Age and Kingdom, where Christianity may be confessed above ground, since a just Authority hath opened our Churches, seeing I may offer all the Publick Devotions that God requires, in those Solemn Places which the Law appoints ; Since I can at the same time be both Devout towards God, and Obedient to my Governours, I resolve I will have no communion with those Assemblies, which the Law of the Nation, and the Canons of the Church make irregular. Sir, I assure you, it adds some cheerfulness to my Publick Devotions, that I can at the same time, both give unto God, the things that are God's, and to *Cæsar* the things that are *Cæsar's*.

Thirdly, I resolve I will never be a member of our separate Congregations ; because in them I cannot be assured of my compleat communion with the Catholick Church, or the advantages of a Regular Priesthood.

I que-



I question not, but God may pardon without the Absolution of a Priest, and give a man possession of eternal life, without the Seal or Title of a Sacrament : but salvation is a matter of such vast importance, that I would never adventure it upon extraordinary Methods : in concerns of Religion and everlasting interest, I love to enjoy all the security, that God hath given to mankind. In that great Schism of *Israel*, some of the most sober and considering *Jews*, were not satisfied with their communion in that new Church of *Israel*, though it was established by the Law of *Jeroboam*, but returned to worship at *Jerusalem*; yet the Tribes of *Israel* retain'd the same Creed with those of *Judah*, and the Calves of *Dan* and *Bethel* were not design'd for Idols, but set up in imitation of the Cherubims in the Temple, but these wise men were dissatisfied, because their Priests were not of the *Aaronical* Line, and had no other Consecration or Authority, but what was deriv'd from the Patents of *Jeroboam*, and they could not be assured, that God would accept their Oblations from the hands of those men, who had

no Regular Priesthood. Now there is great Reason to believe, that there should be as much order in the Kingdom of *Jesus*, as there was in the *Jewish* Polity; and therefore I am assur'd both by Reason and Sacred Oracles, that there is an Evangelical Priesthood, that hath succeeded that of *Aaron*; That there is a peculiar Order of men, who have receiv'd this Priestly Authority, by a Regular Ordination from the Apostles Successours. And I esteem these men according to *St. Paul's* Injunction, *as the Stewards of the manifold Mysteries of God, and the Ministers of Reconciliation*: and therefore (without an inevitable necessity) I will never live without the advantage and satisfaction of their Ministerial Authority.

*St. Chrysostome* in his Discourse *περὶ ἱερέων*, highly magnifies the Office and Authority of a Priest; for speaking of that order of men, he tells us, *Ἐξουσίαν ἔλαβον ἢ ἔτε Ἀγγέλοις ἢ τε Ἀρχαγγέλοις, ἔδωκεν ὁ θεός, &c.* That God hath invested the Priest with such Authority, as he never conferred upon Angels or Arch-Angels. For to which of the Angels did he say at any time,  
What

What ever ye bind on Earth ; is bound in Heaven ; and whose sins ye Remit, they are Remitted ? *For as the Father gave Power to the Son to Remit sins, so the Son of God hath committed the same Power to his Ministers on Earth.*

I believe the Power of Absolution which was conferred upon the Christian Priesthood , by the Commission of our Lord, is not so large , as the Pope would extend it ; nor yet so inconsiderable as the Puritan fancies it. I believe our Saviour did not trifle , when he granted that Charter to the Apostles , but sure there is something in that Authority , that is solemn and momentous , and whatever it be , I resolve to enjoy the benefit of it. And therefore I declare , that I would sooner travel from *London* to *Larissa* , to communicate with the *Greek Church* , where I might be assured of Priestly Authority , than walk from *Temple-Barr* to *Westminster* , to joyn with a Lay-Conventicle. I know no Rule in the World, that can rationally assure me of Ministerial Authority , but a Sacerdotal succession from the Apostles.

As for the Pretension of inspiration, it is no more than *Mahomet* and *Manes*, and every Impostor have pretended. Their Argument from Gifts, and Qualifications, weighs nothing with me. A Jew under the *Mosaical* Oeconomy, might have hired an *Hebrew* Butcher, who might have slain his Lamb or Goat, and have dress'd it, and laid it upon an Altar with as much art and exactness, as the eldest Priest in the Temple: but then it had been no Sacrifice, nor have ever been accepted of God, as a Legal Attonement: no, it was the Priests offering Sacrifices, that made them Peace-offerings; it was the Priests sprinkling the blood upon the Altar of the Lord, and his burning the Fat, that was an essential Requisite to render the Oblation a sweet savour unto the Lord. Angels and Arch-Angels are Wise, Zealous and Holy Spirits, but all their excellencies do not make them Priests, though in another sense they are Ministering Spirits. To conclude this, since I can no way be rationally secured of my Relation to Christ, or of my participation of all the advantages of Christianity, but by a communion with the Catholic

Lev. 17.  
5, 6.



lick Church and its Ministerial Authority, I do therefore assure you, that I have a greater value for my communion with the Priests and the Temple, than for that ador'd *Diana* of *English* Property. And if any unhappy circumstance should ever put me upon the experiment, I would desert this, to enjoy the other.

Sir, if ever the Christian World become wise and sober, this very consideration would repair the Breaches of the Catholick Church, and prove the final Ruine of fanatick Conventicles.

Our Author passionately declaims against the Supremacy and Ambition of Bishops.

I confess, Pride and Ambition are greatly inconsistent with the humble nature of Christianity, and are strange indecencies in Spiritual Governours: and I will never make an Apology for Vice and Disorder. But this ought not to be urged as a Reason for the extirpation of Episcopacy. Our Lord did not suspend nor degrade his Apostles, because there was a strife among them, who should be the greatest.  
Nor

Nor would it be just or charitable, to charge all Bishops with these evil imputations. I observe one famous Instance of Humility in the Chair of *Rome*, and that Sir you know, is the most Principal Seat of Ambition.

Gregory Bishop of *Rome*, who in the year of our Lord 596. sent *Augustine* into *England* to convert the *Saxons*, in his Epistle to *Eulogius* Bishop of *Alexandria*, disowns the ambitious Title of Universal Supremacy : *Indicare quoque vestra Beatitudo studuit, jam se quibusdam non scribere superba vocabula, quæ ex vanitatis radice prodierunt, & mihi loquitur dicens : Sicut jussistis. Quod verbum jussionis peto à meo Auditu remove, quia scio quis sum, qui estis. Loco enim mihi Fratres estis, moribus Patres, non ergo jussi, sed quæ utilia visa sunt indicare curavi : ——— & ecce in præfatione Epistolæ quam ad me ipsum qui prohibui direxistis, superba Appellationis verbum, Universalem me Papam dicentis, imprimere curastis. Quod peto dulcissima mihi sanctitas vestra ultra non faciat : quia vobis subtrahitur quod alteri plus, quam ratio exigit, præbetur. And we must not  
look*

look upon this Modesty, as the Poor spirited humour of this single Bishop, for he assures us in the same Epistle, that it was the constant humility of his Predecessors. ——— *Recedant verba quæ vanitatem instant, & charitatem vulnerant, & quidem in Sancta Chalcedonensi Synodo atque post à subsequentibus Patribus hoc Decessoribus meis oblatum vestra sanctitas novit, sed tamen nullus eorum uti hoc unquam vocabulo voluit.*

But Sir, our Author not only protests against the Ambition, but the Authority of Bishops: for he tells us, *They do but abuse themselves and others, that would persuade us, that Bishops by Christs institution, have any Superiority over other men, than that of Reverence.*

He grants, that there is a greater Reverence due to them, than to other men, but how this should become a duty, without supposing a just superiority to exact it, I cannot understand.

I will not here ingage in the Controversie about the Divine Right of Episcopacy. But I am sure the Apostles had a Superiority

Superiority over the Seventy Disciples by Christs Institution ; and I am certain that the Antient Catholick Church did esteem Bishops as the Apostles Successors. The first we meet with in Ecclesiastical History that ever denied the Superiority of Bishops, was *Aerius* a discontented *Arian*, and *Epiphanius* records him for a Heretick, and brands his Opinion as a Diabolical Delusion.

Sir, there remains nothing more considerable in our Author, only the old Puritan Cavil against all Pomp and Gestures, Garments and Musick in Publick Worship. I confess, I dislike the gaudy Pageantry and numerous Ceremonies of the *Ordo Romanus*, and I as much abhor the Rudeness of a Conventicle.

Sir, I have neither mind nor leisure to examine the scruples of nicer fancies, but I will propound these Queries, and reserve them for future consideration.

I. Whether the Governours of the Catholick Church have not as much Authority to make Institutions in matters indifferent, as the Apostles ? Whether the  
Womans



Womans Veil, or the Holy Kiss, were more *Jure Divino*, than the Surplice or Sign of the Cross?

2. Whether a Pompous Superstition in Publick Worship, be not more pardonable, than a Rude Forlornness: Or, whether a Sawcy Rudeness will not sooner introduce Atheism, than the most Glorious Superstition?

3. Whether the awful Adorations of the *Jews*, the Glory of the Tabernacle and the Temple, the Ornaments of the Priests, and the Musick, were Levitical, or rather founded upon Moral Reasons?

4. Whether a Publick Oratory or Church that is set apart for the more Solemn Worship of the Eternal God, may not without Superstition be as Glorious and Magnificent, as the *Stadthouse* in *Holland*? (except Imagery.) Whether a Respect to God, will not as much justify one, as a Relation to the States, will vindicate the other?

Sir,

—

—

(98)

Sir, Whenever you please to command,  
I shall enquire for Resolution, in the  
mean I rest,

Sir,

*Your Affectionate Friend  
and Servant,*

R. C.

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*P I N I S.*

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A

# Third Letter

Of R. C. to his very  
Worthy and Honoured  
Friend W. C. Esq;

Wherein some Popular Cavils against  
EPISCOPACY, and the Antient  
Notion of SCHISM, are  
considered.

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LONDON,

Printed by R. W. for William Oliver Book-  
seller in *Normich*, and are to be sold by him  
there, and R. Chiswell at the Rose and  
Crown in St. Paul's Church-  
yard. 1677.







*A Third Letter of R. C. to W. C.*

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SIR,

**W**Hen I first launch'd at your command, our Horizon was dark and lowring, and I thought of nothing but Storms and Shipwracks; But on a suddain the Clouds scattered, and our Light began to break forth like the morning. *Philip de Comines* hath so scofft at our Nation for their easie belief of Prognostications, that I am ashamed to own any regard for Modern Prophecies; But there is one Stanza in *Nostredamus*, of such auspicious aspect to *England*, that my love to my Prince and Country, would perswade me to be credulous. It follows some pages after that ex-

actly accomplished Prediction of the burning of *London*,

Thus in old *French* Rhithme ;

*Le grand Empire sera par Angle-terre,  
Le pempotan des ans plus de trois cens,  
Grandes copies passer par mer et terre,  
Les Lusitains n' en seront pas contents.*

The great Empire on *English* shore  
Shall fix three hundred years and more ;  
Great Fleets and many a Royal band  
Shall move and pass by Sea and Land ;  
The *Lusitains* shall envious be  
At *Englands* powerful Monarchy.

Now Sir, it will be but a Loyal and pleasant superstition to fancy this Prophecie may commence this present year, and if this prediction be ever accomplisht, I should hope for the flourishing estate of the Church of *England* ; for there is no reason to believe, that the *British* Monarchy should ever be glorious under Papal or Presbyterian slavery : And let our *Latitudinarian* Politicians talk what they will, I still believe, that it is one of the fundamentals of the Crown, to maintain the honour and establish-

blishment of the Church of *England* ; whose confess'd principles of Peace and Allegiance is one of the strongest props of the Throne, and the surest guard to the Kings of *England*.

Sir, you must not expect any great matters from this Letter, which had a sudden composure, and is design'd only for diversion to you, and my self. As for my answer to weightier Objections , I reserve them, till the *Doctor* shall realize his Bravadoes, and do me the honour to consider me. In the mean time I shall only give you a short account of my first Voyage, and of a pleasant encounter I had with a *Dutch* Dogger.

At his first salute, he discharg'd upon me a whole volley of Granadoes, call'd me Prelatical Coxcomb, impudent fellow, and a mover of Sedition : But that is true which *Charron* tells us, in his *Petit Traicte de la Sageſſe*, *Il n'ya rien si aysé que mesdire*, That railing is the easiest science in the world. And therefore I shall return no answer to his clamours, only consider his force of reason.

First he sayes, "That the notion of  
H 3 " Schism

“ Schism that I assert, does so severely re-  
 “ flect upon the foreign Churches, who have  
 “ no Bishops, nor Priests of the Apostolick suc-  
 “ cession; that it would be State Interest to  
 “ do justice upon me and my Book, by a  
 “ publick censure of Parliament, for fear it  
 “ should provoke our Neighbours to a War,  
 “ or some other unkind resentments.

Sir, I verily believe, that the little Book  
 like its Author, will be no traveller, nor  
 ever visit foreign Courts or States ; I don't  
 think it will ever see *Leyden*, or *Geneva*, or  
 any of the Cantons of *Switzerland*, and  
 therefore there is no fear of provoking  
 foreign animosities.

The only danger is, that *Censorio Politi-*  
*co* should transport it with some ill design ;  
 but yet if this were done, the Book is so  
 petit a thing, that it would never have such  
 influence abroad, as to raise one company of  
*Dutch* or *Switzers*. Perhaps it may be so  
 far considered beyond Sea, as to levy four  
 or five sheets of paper, and cost the shed-  
 ding of a few drops of Ink ; but it is no way  
 probable, it should create any bloody, or  
 chargeable War : and therefore I hope the  
 angry Gentleman will not so far forget his  
 Politicks, as to trouble that wise and ho-  
 nourable



nourable Assembly of Parliament, with such an idle impertinence.

But Sir, if we must not speak a severe truth for fear of disobliging foreigners, it will be State interest too, to expunge a very considerable part of the Gospel of *Jesus*. For our Lord (who by a Divine Commission and power is the great Lord and dispenser of life eternal) tells us in his Gospel, that *he that believeth in him, though he were dead, yet shall he live, and He will raise him up at the last day; and* St. Joh. 6. 40. *St. John*, (who was Secretary to our Lord, and laid in his bosom) tells us in his Gospel, that the Joh. 1. 12. *power or privilege of being sons of God is given only to as many as receive Christ; that is, to as many as faithfully and piously espouse the Religion of Jesus; and he further assures us in one of his Epistles that God hath given unto us eternal life, and that this eternal life is in his Son; and then concludes, that he who hath the Son hath life, and he who hath not the Son hath not life. Which is the same thing that a great Apostle hath boldly asserted, that there is no name under heaven given unto men, by which they shall be saved, but only the name of Jesus, i. e. that since the coming of the Messiah, no man must hope to be saved by Moses or*

1 Ep. St.  
Joh. c. 5. v.  
11, 12.

Act. 4. 12.

*Mahomet, Brachman* or *Hali*, or by any other Prophet or Religion, but only by *Jesus* and Christianity. Now my Charity is so great, that I dare not say, that one single soul in the Great *Turks* Dominions shall be damned to eternal chains, or that any of the *Moors* of *Africa* shall be doom'd to the blackness of darkness, because they are Mahometans ; I could rather perswade my self that they have their portion in this life, in pleasant and plentiful regions, and at the end shall find a quiet grave, and sleep in dust. But in all the *Magna Charta* of the Gospel, I do not find one clause, that intitles those Aliens to a resurrection, or the blissful visions and felicities of a heavenly Kingdom. No, that blessedness seems only reserv'd for the Christian Church, whom only the Gospel calls the *sons* or the *household of God* ; and therefore as far as can be adjudged by us, they are the sole heirs of that eternal Kingdom.

Now this hard sentence may incense the whole body of *Turks* and Infidels, who you know command the vastest and most potent Empires of the world, and therefore are far more formidable, than a little Canton of Christendome, and therefore by our Politicians pruden-  
tials, it will be an important interest

of State, to erase those forecited Texts out of our *English* Bibles for fear we should provoke the Grand *Signior*, and the great *Cham* of *Tartary*, and alarm the Indian *Mogul*, and the black Legions of *Morocco*.

Secondly, as soon as this smoke was over, he fired upon me this thundring argument; *viz.* “What if a man should be cast upon  
“some uninhabited Island? Must he there-  
“fore be counted a Schismatick, and be  
“damned, because he is out of the Juris-  
“diction and Ministry of all Bishops and  
“Priests?”

Sir, here's nothing but powder and noise; for a man may be a Schismatick, though he lives next door to a Cathedral, and a man may be a member of the Catholick Church, though he be cast upon *terra incognita*. For we must suppose that this unfortunate man, who is to be cast upon some new Isle of providence, is a very pious member of the Catholick Church, and never made any malicious separation from the Government of it; and therefore having never cut himself off from the communion of the Church by any act of his own, he shall still be accounted a member of it, and retain a virtual union with it, and shall have an interest  
in

in its Prayers and Devotions, and God will supply his spiritual necessities, and be his Priest.

I never dream't of such an absolute necessity of Bishops and Priests, as if a Christian could in no case enter into life, without their conduct and Ministry; All I assert, is this, that the ordinary appointed method of being united to Christ, and possessed of the advantages of Christianity, is to live under the Authority and Ministry of the Bishops and Priests of the Catholick Church, when that privilege can be enjoyed; and therefore if we suppose a man to be cast upon some remote uninhabited Island beyond all the lines of actual communication with the Church, yet under this necessity he is as safe as if he dwelt within the Province of *Canterbury*, and maintained a Priest in his own Family; and though he may a while live an unfortunate solitary life, yet I doubt not, but after his death, notwithstanding this misfortune, he shall be received into the innumerable company of Angels, and the Catholick Assembly of the Church in Heaven.

But those men who live within the compass and jurisdiction of the Catholick Church,



Church, and may enjoy all the advantages of Priesthood, and yet shall wholly divide themselves from the Communion and Ministry of all Bishops and Priests ; I think such mentempt God by that extraordinary presumption, and adventure their eternal interest upon disputable terms, and hazardous uncertainties.

We are assured by Reason and Divine Oracles, that *man doth not live by bread alone*, it is not absolutely necessary that we should eat or drink, to support our animal beings. You know *Moses* when he convers'd with Angels upon the Mount, did not eat in forty daies and forty nights, his appetite being suspended, and his bodily frailty supported by an extraordinary divine power : but yet if a man having plenty at command should from this instance of *Moses* try the experiment, to live without meat or drink, I believe he would dye like a Fool, and deserve the burial of an As.

'Tis not indispensably necessary for a man to embarque in Ship or Boat, when he designs a Voyage beyond Sea ; for we know *St. Peter* ( being upheld by a power stronger than his fears ) did walk upon the waves : but if a man being designed for *Holland*, and  
having

having a good Ship before him, and court-  
ed into it, by Owner, Master and Pilot,  
should yet trust to a tread-water faith, and  
adventure to foot it to *Amsterdam*, I fancy  
the man would drown, long before he come  
to the *Texel*. Sir, a Ship is such a trite Em-  
blem of the Church, that I will leave this al-  
lusion to your application.

And now Sir, *Censorio Politico* goes off, but  
there appears a Statesman of War, who  
threatens nothing but fire and sinking ; for  
he vows by the *Scotch Covenant*, " That  
" Episcopacy is alterable, and not *jure divi-*  
" *no*; that it is but a model of humane contri-  
" vance, and therefore being but of civil con-  
" stitution, a separation from that Govern-  
" ment may be Sedition, but it cannot amount  
" to Schism in my notion.

Sir, this is the old Popish and Presbyteri-  
an cavil ; for the *Italians* in the Council  
of *Trent*, were of the same judgement with  
our *English* Assembly of Divines, and will  
not allow Episcopacy to be *jure divino* for  
fear of destroying the two greatest Idols in  
the world, Papacy and Presbytery.

I am infallibly assured, that Priesthood  
has a divine right, and I am certain that the  
whole

whole Catholick Church for fifteen hundred years knew no other method of conferring Priesthood, but by Episcopal authority ; but that Episcopacy is *jure divino* hath been learnedly and substantially asserted by Bishop *Taylor*, Dr. *Hammond*, and Bishop *Hall*; and I never saw an answer to those elaborate discourses, and therefore the Church of *England* is yet in full possession of that Doctrine : and I humbly advise the *Doctor* first to engage with those great Champions, and if he triumphs upon them, he will have a very easie Conquest over me.

Sir, I am not able to add any thing to those Worthies, but I will give you my private thoughts of Episcopacy.

I observe that though the Christian World had in all Ages vehement contentions and Controversies about some Articles and Doctrines of Religion, yet no Council or Society of Christians did ever dispute the form of Government ; but notwithstanding their differences of opinion, did yet for fifteen hundred years together universally acquiesce in the government of Bishops, who in a successive line did descend from the Apostles ; and so notwithstanding their Dogmatical divisions, they still were united  
into

into an intire body of one Catholick and Apostolick Church.

Now when I consider that these Christians who liv'd in several Centuriés, and Nations distinguished by diversities of Language and varieties of opinion and interest, did all settle themselves under Episcopal authority, this consideration made me first presume that Episcopacy might be that pattern of Government, which Christ gave to his Apostles upon Mount *Olivet*, or at least was establish'd by some such unscrupled Authority as did not become the Christian Church to call in question.

I am sure that neither pride, covetousness or ambition, could ever be the original of Episcopal Authority; for I find almost thirty Bishops in a continued succession from the Apostles in the Chair of *Rome*, who wore no other Crown or Mytre, but that of Martyrdom. And I have great reason to believe that *Doctor O's* Conventicle in *London*, is of more yearly profit, than was *St. Cyprian's* Primacy of *Africa*, and a greater revenue, than the Bishoprick of *Rome* in the first three hundred years; and therefore I can't understand what reason upon earth could have tempted any Christian into an  
Episco-



Episcopal Throne, under the Reign of the Pagan and persecuting Emperours, if they had not thought themselves oblig'd to continue that succession of Government, and supply that place by an ordinance from Heaven.

I have a great esteem and compassion for the *Greek Church* ; for though they have no Lands nor Revenues to maintain the Honour, yet they still retain the Order of Bishops. Now I consider that the Christian Church was first founded in that part of the World, and the first Builders did most especially use the language of the *Greeks*, and some of the *Greek Fathers* did converse with the Apostles, the Master-builders, and therefore this Church above all others may in reason be supposed most exactly to know the model of the first Temple. Now I never heard of a Presbytery in *Asia*, or of a *Greek Lay-Elder* ; and I can give no reason, why the *Greek Church* should be so tenacious of Episcopal Government, if they were not evidently assured, that that Authority was of Divine Institution ; for else Presbytery, or Independency were far more consistent with their poverty and Captivity, than Episcopal jurisdiction.

Besides all this, *Calvin, Bucer, Melancthon, Zanchius,*

*Zanchius*; and all the Divines of the *Augustan* Confession did declare, that Episcopacy was a very antient Church-Government, and that it was ordain'd *ad tollenda schismata* to prevent factions and confusions in the Christian Church. Now seeing 'tis granted that Episcopacy by its very form and nature is the most proper and expedient Government to preserve the unity of the Church, have we not reason to presume, that our Lord, who so carefully design'd the peace and order of his Kingdom upon earth, should himself appoint that Government, which does most naturally and certainly tend to the unity of it ?

There is nothing more afflicts my thoughts, than the contradictory Platforms of Church Government, or the establish'd Divisions of Christendom : I am not so deeply concerned for the differences of Opinion, for I hope there may come an Age so wise and considering, as the Christian World may discern and retract their mistakes, at least to be so calm and sober, as not to violate the Sacred obligations of Charity and Communion, for a differing sentiment : But if several Nations, or Societies of Christians may cast themselves into contrary Models of Church Government, according  
to

to the varieties of their humours or interests ; this will turn the Kingdom of *Jesus* into a *Babel*, perpetuate our Schisms and Animosities, and so fatally fix our Divisions, that nothing will put an end to the Churches Flames, but the conflagration of the World.

Secondly, this Gentleman will not have Episcopacy to be *jure divino*, because there may arise such emergencies of State, as may require an alteration of Episcopal Government in the Church ; For he insinuates that the Government of Bishops in the Church is not consistent with all Models of State, for our *Politico's* will allow Episcopacy only to be adapted to Monarchical Regiment, but think it cannot be bent to the figure of any other Civil Government. They fancy Presbytery has the most natural alliance to Aristocracie, and the Lay-Elders to be Cousin-Germans to Democracie.

1. To affirm that Episcopacy is alterable, because it is not of Divine right, is a fallacy, that my Logician calls *petitio principii* : the Gentleman must first strongly prove, that Episcopacy is not *jure divino*, and then perhaps we may admit his consequence, and grant it to be alterable ; but I do not remember one Argument that the City-Gentleman  
gave

gave to his Friend in the Countrey to prove that Episcopacy was no Divine institution; We have nothing but his confidence in *se* what *is*, and I hope it will not be thought affront or Rebellion to deny the arbitrary power of a private authority.

102. He insinuates a politick reason why Episcopacy must be alterable; and that is, because it is not suited to every change and form of State Government. Now I am resolved to examine this Civil Argument. I am so far of the Statesman's mind, that all the several just forms and establishments of Secular Government are *jura divina*, and that their respective Subjects are equally obliged by a Divine Law to obey their Governours. I believe the Republick of *Venice*, which had an honest and providential Original, is as much of Divine right, as the Monarchy of *France*.

But as for Church Government, our Lord hath told us, that his Kingdom *is not* of *this world*, and therefore I thought fit, that the Church, which is Christ's Kingdom, was to have a peculiar Government of its own, and was not designed to be so far Secular, as to have no proper constitution of its own, but forced to take its form and measures from



from all the varieties of humane Politics.

That Episcopacy will not consist with every form of Civil Government, is confuted by the constant practice of fifteen hundred years; I am sure in those fifteen Centuries, there were other forms of Civil Government in Christendom beside Empire or Monarchy, yet all that time Episcopacy was unaltered, and did very happily consist with all the varieties of Secular Regiments. I believe *Alexandria* was a free City, or a kind of Democracy (though perhaps under tribute to the Emperour) for I find an Epistle of the Apostate *Julian* to the people of *Alexandria*, about the expulsion of *Athanasius*; and yet though it were a Populacy, they enjoyed their Civil Liberties under Episcopal Government, nay *Alexandria* was the Seat of an Archbishop, nay it was one of the Patriarchates of the East, and that is the highest exaltation of Episcopacy. Is not *Venice* a most wise and flourishing Commonwealth, and yet very happy under Episcopal inspection? For I never yet heard, there was a Presbyterian Classis or a Club of Lay-Elders annexed to that Politick Republick.

And though I find the Emperour *Frederick* about the year 1124. did by an Imperi-

*De Repub.  
Helv.*

al. Patent grant the Bishop of *Geneva*, the honour of a Principality, yet *Simlerus* tells us, that the free City of *Geneva* did safely enjoy their proper immunities and liberties ; and I believe they were a freer City under the jurisdiction of their antient Bishops, than ever they were since under their new Model of Presbytery.

Sir, I hope the Monarchy of *England* will stand as long as the *British* Ocean flows, but let us suppose, ( though I abhor the supposition ) let us suppose I say, that this Monarchy should decline to an Aristocracie, or with the noise of Liberty be cheated into a Commonwealth ; yet Sir, any man notwithstanding these foresights and prospects of possibilities, may safely swear never to endeavour the alteration of Episcopal Government : for though I believe that Papacy and Presbytery, can never be honourable friends to any sort of Civil Government, yet I am sure the Bishops of *England*, ( who are of the same constitution and Religion with the good old Bishops of the first four Centuries ) will ever pay a Christian and peaceable deference to all Civil Superiours, by what forms or title so ever they may be distinguished.

Sir,

Sir, did you never hear of a strange Book that dropt out of the Clouds like a fire-ball, which (if it had not luckily burnt out in the street) might have put *London* into a hotter flame than the fire in Sixty six; The design of the Book was to prove, that the Kingdom of *England* did not stand upon *terra firma*, but like a floating Island was to move and change according to the varieties of State-emergency or popular humours; this prodigie once I saw, and there I found a prodigious reason, why considering and conscientious Gentlemen ought not to swear never to alter the establish'd Government of the Church; viz. because there were many things in the Canons and Liturgie, Articles and Homilies of the Church, that might or ought to be altered.

Now Sir, perhaps the design may be clear, but as for the reason, it is still in *nubibus*. I ever thought the metamorphosis of men into Wolves, were but melancholy dreams and fables; but if it could be really effected, that a man could be transformed from human shape into a Wolf or Tyger, this must be granted to be a substantial alteration. But if a man, who was accusom'd to wear short Hair and a long Beard, and Spanish Breeches,

I 3

should

should for some private reasons or emergencies change his mode, shave both his Head and Beard, and wear Perukes and Pantaloones, I should fancy this were no substantial alteration of the Government of the body natural ; for the man were the same individual man still, notwithstanding those circumstantial changes. Thus I believe, to turn a Monarchy into a Commonwealth, or Episcopacy into Presbytery, were an essential change of the establish'd Government ; but to repeal an old Statute, or to enact a new one, is no alteration of the Monarchy ; and the Canons, Liturgie, Articles, and Homilies of the Church may in some things be altered without any substantial alteration of Episcopal Government. Therefore this was not the grand Reason for refusing the establishing Oath, there was some other secret in it, that will not become me to enquire after.

Sir, I beg pardon for this digression, it was a sudden gale, that thus hurried me beyond my point of the Compass, but now I resolve for the Harbour, and to lay at Anchor ; but if the Enemy appear, and send a Fire-ship upon me, then I will let loose again with resolution.

Since



Since you made me publick, I have had many varieties and contradictions of Censures pass'd upon me, as the old Statue had at Rome, of which *Remundus* speaks in his Book *de Fabula Joannæ*; one fancied it was design'd for the Blessed Virgin, another thought it did represent Pope *Joan*, (whom though some question'd whether ever she liv'd a Pope, yet all agree she dyed no Virgin;) Another believ'd it was the Statue of some eminent Pope, and a fourth did think it some old Idol of Pagan Rome: Thus some of our Sectaries report me a Papist, and I heard of a Popish Priest that call'd me Heretick: *I. C.* for good reason sayes, the Author and the Book are both silly things; and I am certainly inform'd, that another Leader of a Conventicle did believe the Book was compos'd by a Club, and so by that complement of comprehension, allows me brains enough for an Assembly of Divines. It is my honour and satisfaction, that I hear no man speak evil of me, that speaks well of the Government. And if you will trust my opinion of the Author, I have great reason to believe that he is a plain Honest man, who  
heartily

heartily loves his Prince and Country,  
and is a Resolv'd Member of the Re-  
form'd Catholick Church of En-  
gland, and,

SIR,

*Your assured Friend  
and Servant,*

**R. C.**

March 2.

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**P I N I S.**

